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DETECTIVE STORIES

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FEATURING

SEALS OF WAX

by

Jack Bechdolt

A DETECTIVE NOVELETTE

MYSTERY MAGAZINE

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Our Next Issue

WE are, as usual, trying to make every succeeding number of this publication an improvement on its predecessor. Therefore we are pleased to announce that No. 127, on the newsstands about February 15th, is going to be one of our banner issues. The contents were selected with unusual care in order to please all tastes, and we are quite sure you will be more than pleased with it. Among the numerous contributors of splendid detective fiction the name of Harold Podhaski stands in a class of its own. We intend to give you one of his best efforts as a feature in the form of a detective novelette entitled "When Crooks Conspire." There is a gripping quality of interest in this author's work which holds a reader spellbound from beginning to end. Not only is his style interesting but he has woven an ingenious plot into this novelette filled with mystery and exciting episodes. Do not fail to read this truly great story as it will surely give you considerable pleasure and entertainment. A new two-part serial begins in the next number entitled "The Web of Evidence." It was written by D. L. Radway, a pleasing author of detective fiction. Then there will be another of Carl H. Getz's fascinating technical articles called "Crime Detection in France." The author is an authority on these subjects and has constructed his descriptions in a masterful manner. An unusually fine batch of short stories will appear, every one dealing with detective plots and adventure. They are the work of the most skillful writers of this class of fiction and cover a wide variety of subjects. Then there is to be a splendid assortment of short articles covering a very wide field.

In short, the next number of this magazine is going to be the biggest ten cents' worth any one ever saw, and we hope you will recommend it to all of your acquaintances when you have read it

THE EDITOR.

NOTICE

All coupons in the Cash Prize Contest must be in our office no later than February 15th. Any coupons sent in after that date will not be accepted.

GATHER COUPONS! WIN THE PRIZES!

Seals of Wax

by Jack Bechdolt

CHAPTER ONE

A LIVING DEAD MAN

IN all the world but two persons knew the answer to the mystery that agitated the small, Western mining town of Canyon, that agitated the Ajax Mining Company and that agitated Detective Ford Markman of New York City. Neither of the two who knew the secret were in the least likely to divulge what they knew.

One of these persons was the bandit who had waylaid George Field, messenger for the Ajax Mining Company, robbed him of the company's payroll and left him for dead in the woods near the mountain trail that led from the company offices at Canyon to the company mines fifteen miles farther in the mountains. Deputy sheriffs skilled in reading signs had been in the party that found George Field dying in the woods. They had read the story of that hold-up in the wreck of the light automobile Field had used, bullet marks on its tin sides, earth marred by signs of a struggle, broken twigs and branches and flattened shrubs where Field's body had been dragged to concealment. These skilled woodsmen agreed that but one man had committed the assault and robbery. Certainly that man was not expected to come to the fore with information that would incriminate himself.

The other person who knew the answer to the riddle was Field, the company messenger. And George Field lay on a cot in the Ajax hospital, a living dead man.

The Ajax company doctor, Doctor Bursel, had called experts from the Coast cities to consult on the case of George Field. Their unanimous decision was that Field would continue to live, to live probably the normal span of years, and yet would be no more than a man dead and buried.

In the battle which had taken place on the lonely mountain trail Field had received a bullet wound in the head. The deadly leaden slug had creased his scalp and broken a bit of the bony plate protecting the brain, producing a paralysis of speech and movement, a paralysis not quite total, but so close to that state that the man lay motionless as a corpse. He could neither speak nor turn his head. His eyes by some peculiar muscular injury remained open and staring. So far as anybody could tell George Field could not hear, or, if he could hear, he lacked any means of communication to inform the world. His heart continued to beat. He could assimilate the

nourishment administered by the hospital nurses. Those organs necessary to continue life in his battered body were functioning. But otherwise George Field was a dead man.

George Field certainly never would tell who had robbed the Ajax company of its fifteen-thousand-dollar payroll. He couldn't!

Detective Markman thought of these things as he stood by Field's bedside in the company hospital.

A quiet-spoken, mild-mannered, middle-aged man, the famous investigator of crime had none of the peculiarities of those who follow his profession of man-hunting. For many years Detective Markman had been a professor of mathematics in a New York university. Eventually his sensational successes in solving mysteries which baffled the metropolitan police had led to country-wide fame and his alliance with the regular metropolitan force in a capacity quasi-official.

Detective Markman had gone to the Pacific coast on a much-needed vacation. Already that rest had been broken by a most peculiar case in the motion picture colony in Hollywood, a case into which he was drawn by an old friendship. Then, with an interval of but a few precious, enjoyable days of rest, Markman had received a telegram from another friend, Porter, head of the Ajax Mining Company, imploring his help.

As a result of that telegram and his interview with Porter, Markman had come to the lonely mountain hamlet armed with authority to interfere in any branch of company activity he saw fit.

Due to Porter's orders, the mild-mannered gentleman was, for the time being, czar of the place.

He had promised Porter to find the man guilty of the brutal assault on the company's payroll messenger and bring him to justice.

Standing by the bedside of the stricken messenger, realizing that George Field, the one available eye-witness, was incapable of any form of communication with him, Ford Markman was moved to exclaim aloud: "The case seems to be hopeless. This poor fellow will never speak again—perhaps never understand what is spoken to him. Why, if the guilty man were standing here now he would be unable to indicate that fact to us in any way. Terrible!"

CHAPTER TWO

MARKMAN GOES FISHING

AT the detective's exclamation a sob startled the little group by the bedside. A young woman was crying. It was Nellie Field, sister of the mortally injured man.

Nellie Field was a tall, graceful girl with a great mass of gold hair, dark-blue eyes and cheeks tanned golden brown by sun and wind. In the town of Canyon she was an undisputed princess. All the unmarried men and half of the married ones as well raved of her charms. Only those too old to see or too afraid of their wives to speak their thoughts failed to pay tribute to the girl's beauty and character.

Since her brother had been brought to the hospital Nellie Field was at his side as many hours as doctor and nurses would allow her to be. Brother and sister were unusually attached, perhaps because they were orphans.

Ford Markman's words brought forth Nellie's grief by its tone of sincere sympathy for her brother's suffering. Despite her effort she could not control the outburst. She turned to grope her way from the little room, and a huge, towering young fellow who stood by her side took her arm and guided her to a secluded spot where she could recover self-mastery.

This man, who accompanied Nellie Field and tried by kindly meant advice to restrain her tears, was Fred Barrington, a shift boss of the Ajax mine. When Markman, with Curtis Lennox, the general superintendent, and Doctor Bursel had called at the hospital, they had discovered Barrington and Nellie already at the bedside. Fred Barrington, the detective was told, had been George Field's chum, and the brother and

sister and the towering young miner had been intimates since early school days.

The three men coughed and shuffled their feet. The girl's grief left them slightly embarrassed.

Markman exclaimed: "I'd have bitten my tongue out rather than make that girl cry! If I had known——"

"Miss Field's devotion has been beautiful," Doctor Bursel explained. "It is just recently she has given up hoping that by some miracle of medicine or surgery George can be restored to normal. Her grief is only natural."

"Sad, very sad," Lennox, the superintendent agreed with a shake of the head. "But, after all, Markman, don't take it too hard. A girl's tears aren't the most important thing in the world."

"There I beg to differ with you," Markman exclaimed quickly. "This girl's tragedy, I think, is the most important thing I have seen for a great many days—yes, or years, though my years have witnessed many griefs."

Lennox explained eagerly: "True! And very sad, of course. But what I meant to suggest was that a girl's tears, sad as they may be, are nothing in importance compared to the necessity of discovering the murderous brute who caused them. Our business is to find the man who all but killed George Field—who left him worse than dead, isn't it? We must find that man!"

"True," Markman agreed more mildly. "Yet I can't forget that girl's tragedy. Tell me, is this young man Barrington her sweetheart?"

Doctor Bursel answered: "He loves her, yes, but so do most of the men in Canyon and the mountains around. Perhaps she cares more for him than the others. I do not think they are engaged."

"They would make a splendid match," the detective smiled thoughtfully. "Her beauty and his strength—why, that chap's almost a giant!"

"And a fine, intelligent, ambitious fellow," the doctor added heartily.

"Yes, yes, very deserving," Lennox agreed absently. Plainly he rather resented Markman's wandering attention that seemed to leave the mystery of a stolen payroll and a brutal crime at the slightest provocation.

"Now, doctor, about this poor chap, Field." Markman lowered his voice unconsciously, though the man on the cot lying helpless, rigid, staring at the white plaster ceiling with eyes that could not see, was incapable of comprehending a word. "You are certain there is no hope of curing him?"

The doctor shook his head. "Afraid that's it, Markman! The two specialists I had up are the best men on the Coast. They both agreed with me."

"I dislike to suggest or interfere, doctor," Markman argued softly, "but would you allow me to call in another man, my friend Low of New York City."

"Adolphus Low!" the doctor exclaimed. "You know Low?"

"By reputation. What doctor doesn't know of Low, the greatest brain specialist of them all?"

"Low would come here to oblige me," Markman said modestly. "Would you mind if I asked him? In justice to this poor fellow and because of that sister of his, I'd like to do everything possible."

Doctor Bursel broke into exclamations of delight. He said that he would consider consultation with the great Doctor Low of the rarest privilege. If Markman thought it could be arranged——

"I'll telegraph at once," Markman promised. "Who knows but Low may find some way to restore this poor devil to the living——"

"Really, Markman," Lennox interrupted, "the company has done everything in reason to help this man. The additional expense of bringing an expert from New York——"

"There will be no expense, Mr. Lennox. I will look after that."

"But you are here to solve this mystery, to find the perpetrator of a brutal crime?"

"Exactly. And if it is possible to cure poor Field here, why should he not describe to us the man who waylaid him, robbed him of the payroll and left him for dead?"

"'If,'" Lennox quoted with something near a sneer. "But, my dear sir, how hopeless an if! Meantime there is evidence, clues

no doubt, all manner of things to be looked into."

Markman shook his head. "I do not think so."

"But you scarcely know the facts! You have not yet been to the scene of the crime."

"I think I understand the facts, Mr. Lennox. I will tell you what I know, and you can check my knowledge. Three weeks ago Thursday at one o'clock in the afternoon this man Field left the company offices here with a black bag containing fifteen thousand dollars, the monthly payroll for the men at the Ajax mine. He drove the company's little car. When Field did not appear at the mine that evening a search was made. The car was found where it had run off the mountain road and smashed against a tree. There were bloodstains on the cushions and on the ground about and many scars from bullets. The ground was torn up by a struggle. Following a plain trail for some quarter mile the searchers found Field's body. He was exactly as we see him now, to all intent and purpose a dead man. And the payroll money had been stolen. Is there anything more?"

"Those are the facts," Lennox admitted. "But——"

"But what, Mr. Lennox?"

"Well, I understood that you were here to find out more—other facts; to detect the thing, in other words."

"And so I am," Markman agreed. "I choose to begin in my own way. I begin by sending for the one man, of all known medical experts, who might possibly restore Field to a conscious, intelligent condition. If that can be done Field can tell us much Meantime we must wait."

"But you will go over the ground, of course? You'll be following up clues?"

Ford Markman smiled and shook his head. "Do you know, gentlemen," he exclaimed genially, "I am on a vacation? So far it has been a pretty much interrupted vacation. Well, one of the things I came West to enjoy was some good trout fishing, and I have been assured that the mountain streams about here can't be beaten. It will take my friend, Doctor Low, at least six days to get here after receipt of my telegram. That means just six days to my advantage. During those six days, if it's all the same to you, I'm not going to worry my head for one minute about who stole the Ajax payroll and almost killed this poor devil, Field. As a personal favor, I ask you not to mention the matter again. And if anybody wants me badly he'll have to hike out into the hills after me. I'm off with guide and tent to-morrow. Wish me luck!"

With these words Markman smiled again, nodded to his astonished hearers and left the hospital.

He went direct to the telegraph office at the little railway station, dispatched a message to his friend, Doctor Low, of New York City, and forthwith began collecting his outfit for the pleasure jaunt to the trout streams.

All who heard of this conduct were astonished, but most astonished and angry of all was Curtis Lennox.

"What kind of a detective would leave an important case like this and go fishing?" the mine superintendent asked of anybody who would listen. "The man is either mad or a scoundrel!"

While all the residents of Canyon did not at once adopt an opinion of the famous detective as extreme as that held by Lennox, doubts of Markman's conduct were general. When, that evening, Markman sought out Fred Barrington and proposed that Fred devote a few days to accompanying him into the hills on a fishing trip, the big, bronzed fellow hesitated painfully. Barrington tried one excuse, then another. Markman argued patiently, reasonably against each pretext.

"Barrington," the detective exclaimed finally, "be frank! You don't want to go with me? You don't approve of this trip?"

Barrington blushed. "It's not my business what you do," he said slowly. "I guess you know your own affairs best, but——"

"But you think since I was sent here to investigate this crime, it's rather peculiar of me to waste time on a pleasure excursion, is that it?"

"We-e-l-l——"

"You think I ought to stay right here in Canyon on the job?"

"Maybe I look at this different," Barrington said awkwardly. "You see, George Field has been my chum all my life. Now, somebody tried to murder George; they've worse than murdered him, you might say, and I take it pretty hard because that person hasn't been found out. And, besides, there's Nellie, George's sister, that is——"

"Exactly!" Markman agreed. "I think I understand how you feel about George. As for Miss Field—you love her, don't you?"

"I'd be a fool to deny it," Barrington said soberly. "I guess everybody in Canyon knows about it. But she——"

"Did you ever tell Miss Field how you feel about it? Did you ever ask her to marry you?"

Coming from a stranger, Barrington had every right to resent such a question. It was Markman's manner, a friendly, serious, winning way, that disarmed the query of offensive curiosity.

Barrington answered by a slow shake of the head. "I—well, somehow, I never got up courage; that's a fact! I get to feeling I ain't fit to ask her anything like that. And now, of course, with all the trouble she's got, why I wouldn't say anything that might worry her more. You see, she's such a—such a wonder! So tender-hearted, so gentle to everybody. Why, if she was to get the idea a refusal would hurt me, it would hurt her, too, just to say it."

Markman looked at the big fellow, and his eyes glowed. He laid a friendly hand on Barrington's arm. "Bully for you!" he applauded softly. "You talk like a regular fellow! But see here, Barrington, suppose you could help George and Nellie Field by going fishing with me? Never mind how. Take my word for it for the present. If you thought that, you'd go, wouldn't you?"

"You bet I would!" Barrington cried heartily.

"All right," Markman nodded. "That's settled. We start in the morning. But you needn't mention to anybody that I said you could help me by coming along. Understand?"

"Not a word," Barrington agreed quickly. "I'm not one to talk."

Markman nodded with a look that said he could count on the big fellow. He was not mistaken.

CHAPTER THREE

THE GREAT SPECIALIST

CURTIS LENNOX had waylaid Doctor Bursel, and the two were talking confidentially in the manager's private office.

"I hear Markman got back to-day?" Lennox said.

"Yes, early this afternoon. The specialist, Doctor Low, gets in this afternoon on the up train."

"Did Markman catch any fish?"

"Didn't talk with him myself," the doctor answered. "But I saw Fred Barrington. Barrington says they had a bully time, got a lot of trout and saw a lot of country. He says Markman is a great fellow for a camp mate."

"Isn't that nice!" The manager's exclamation was pointed with sarcasm. "I tell you, Bursel," he exclaimed vehemently, "that's not my idea of the kind of man to put in charge of a serious investigation like this. What has he done? Not one thing, except come up here and go fishing! Is that a way for a detective to do, especially a man that's drawing big pay from the Ajax company to ferret out this mystery? It is not! And, what's more"—Lennox sank his voice to a confidential whisper—"I sent a report on this man back to Mr. Porter himself. A confidential report. Told all about Markman's conduct and his fishing trip. Felt it was my duty to inform Porter."

"What did the big boss say?" the doctor asked curiously.

"No answer yet. I expect a telegram. Porter doesn't waste any time when he gets the facts straight."

Doctor Bursel agreed with a portentous nod. "But Markman's doing one thing that shows he's a big man," he argued. "He's bringing Doctor Low here. It isn't everybody can get a famous man like Low to cross the continent for the sake of some

poor devil in a mining camp he never even heard of."

"You don't believe for a minute that this Doctor Low can help George Field?"

"No, I don't," Bursel admitted, "but it's giving George the benefit of the best medical advice in the country. And if anybody can perform a miracle, that man is Doctor Low. Which reminds me the train is due. I'll be on my way to meet him. Pretty big chance for a country doctor like me to work with a man like Low!"

"I'll go along," Lennox suggested, rising. "I want to know what this expert has to say about Field. Not that I believe he can do anything for him!"

Doctor Low arrived and was taken to the hospital by Doctor Bursel.

Lennox and Markman waited in the little office of the company hospital for news of the stricken man.

"Hope you've been having an enjoyable vacation," Lennox observed with a politeness that barely concealed sarcasm.

"Very delightful," Markman agreed.

"Catch lots of trout?"

"Not so many. Enough for the camp. I'm no great hand to take trout just for the sake of getting a big string."

"Where did you fish?"

"Really, you'd better ask Fred Barrington," Markman laughed. "I had to take his word for everything, not knowing the country. I do know that Fred's a wonderful man in the woods. He never seems to tire out!"

"And I don't suppose you bothered your head once about the Ajax payroll robbery, or who tried to kill George Field?"

"Not once," Markman agreed amiably. "I just rested and forgot business."

Curtis Lennox was working himself into a state of exasperation. At every further cheery assurance that he had forgot the payroll robbery which Markman gave the mine manager got a little hotter under the collar. He could scarcely contain his wonder and indignation. What he might have said at this point would, without doubt, have been more frank than tactful, but the arrival of the two doctors interrupted.

"What do you know?" Bursel exclaimed. "Doctor Low thinks something can be done! Perhaps Field can be restored to normal, after all!"

Low, the specialist, said gravely: "I do not care to make promises. It is a peculiar case, most peculiar. But I have hopes that an operation is possible. I think we must try one."

"Do you mean to say," Lennox exclaimed, "that Field can really be made normal again, so that he can talk, tell us about the robbery?"

"If he can be cured he will undoubtedly tell about the robbery," Doctor Low smiled. "Of course we must not count on this too strongly."

"By George, what wonderful news for his sister!" Doctor Bursel smiled.

"She must not be told," Markman cut in quickly. "This must remain a secret between the four of us, at least until the fact is accomplished. Am I not right, Doctor Low?"

"Undoubtedly," Low agreed seriously. "It would be cruel to raise the sister's hopes in vain. So many things, little, unexpected things, might defeat our purpose. And yet, gentlemen, I feel almost certain that the thing can be done. I feel I can promise you this operation will succeed."

"How soon?" Lennox demanded with heightened interest. "How long will it take to restore Field's reason?"

"I think that forty-eight hours will tell the story," Doctor Low promised. "We will operate in the morning. Forty-eight hours later, unless the unforeseen happens, you should be able to ask Field what questions you wish."

"Then the day of miracles is not past," Lennox grunted skeptically. "If you do that, Doctor Low, you're even a bigger man than your reputation!"

Markman walked with the manager from the hospital. "By the way," he said confidentially, "the company payroll is made up again to-morrow morning, is it not?"

"Yes."

"The same sum as last month's, fifteen thousand?"

"Yes, the same approximately."

"You draw the cash from the local bank?"

"Certainly."

"In bills?"

"All except a few odd dollars of change."

"And what messenger will you trust with it this time?"

Lenox hesitated, eyeing the detective shrewdly. "I had thought of taking it to the mines myself," he whispered after a glance about to be sure he was not overheard. "I tell you, professor, I'm uneasy! This man who robbed and almost murdered poor Field is still at large. We have not the slightest notion of his identity. He may be any of several dozen men right here in this town. He must be some one familiar with our plans since he knew what day we sent the money, who carried it and where it was safest to waylay Field. If he has robbed us once, what's to prevent his robbing us again?"

"Yes, yes, that's so," Markman agreed, stopping in his rapid walk and much struck by the idea. "We must not run the risk of a second attempt on the payroll."

"I'm glad you see it that way. I tell you I am afraid to trust any man in the company employ. How can I tell who is guilty and who isn't when we haven't even the slightest clue to the perpetrator of this last outrage!"

"You are right, quite right," Markman agreed meekly.

"Well, I don't claim to be a famous detective, but I can see far enough ahead to foresee that danger. Glad you approve my idea."

"I do indeed, Mr. Lennox! Perhaps I can think of even further precautions. Please don't send that money until you see me to-morrow morning. Just let me take charge of its dispatch, will you?"

"You want to handle the payroll?"

"I would like to arrange the manner of its handling."

"But you approved my own idea!"

"Yes. I merely thought I could add a few frills. If you don't mind?" Markman made the request modestly.

Lennox was on the point of indignant outburst. He could not stand interference in his department. But he remembered that Porter, head of the Ajax company, had given specific orders that everybody must do as Markman asked. It would not be diplomatic to cross the detective—just yet!

"I'll have the money ready and waiting for you in the morning," he promised sulkily, and nodded a good-night. As he turned into his bungalow Lennox raged at the interference. Then he thought: "If that telegram comes in answer to my report on this detective, I don't think I'll have to worry much! You can have your way for the present, my dear Markman! To-morrow may tell a different story!"

So thinking, Lennox unlocked the door to his bungalow. His Chinese servant greeted him with an outstretched hand that offered a yellow envelope.

Lennox tore open the covering and read the telegram:

Absolutely satisfied with Markman's conduct of case. Give him every assistance in your power. He remains in command.

PORTER.

"Can you beat that!" Lennox raved. "The fool! And after I warned him about this fat-head detective!"

CHAPTER FOUR

SEALS OF WAX

DETECTIVE MARKMAN was in the general manager's office early next morning. "I hear good news of Field," he observed, with a bright smile for Lennox. "He goes on the operating table before noon, and my friend Low is certain that his faculties can be restored completely."

"Sounds almost too good to be true," Lennox grumbled. "However, I hope so."

"What interests me is the thought that before another day Field will be able to tell us who it was waylaid him and stole the payroll."

"Providing your friend Low doesn't fail.

But I suppose none of you New York experts ever fail!"

"We seldom do," Markman agreed, ignoring the sneer. "By the way, is the payroll ready?"

Lennox produced a sizable bundle wrapped in heavy brown paper tied with thick cord and sealed in several places with blobs of red wax. "Here it is," he said, "fifteen thousand dollars."

Markman took the bundle from his hand. He opened a pocket-knife and started to rip the paper wrapper.

"What's the idea?" Lennox demanded, reaching a hand to stop him.

"I want to know that the money is in here."

"I say it's there, don't I?" Lennox's tone was angry. His face was flushed. "That's the way we wrap it to send to the mine. It's a lot of bother fixing it. Why make us twice the trouble? My word ought to be good."

"My dear sir," Markman answered firmly, his knife ripping off the paper wrapping as he spoke, "your word is good—with me. But in the case of fifteen thousand dollars, for which I can be held accountable equally with you, a little precaution is only natural. When I know the money is in here——"

His words stopped as the wrappers fell away and revealed packets of greenbacks and an envelope filled with small silver.

"I hope you're satisfied!" Lennox sneered.

"Let's count it," Markman suggested, unperturbed. "Let us both be sure of the amount. I have a good reason for suggesting this."

Together they counted the bills over and agreed that the proper sum was in the package.

"Now," said the detective, "please get me a box of typewriter paper, plenty of wrapping paper and the string and sealing wax." When this was done Markman, with his knife, cut a package of blank paper strips, the size and quantity of the bills making up the mine payroll. "You see?" he explained. "I'm planning a dummy package, a duplicate of the real one. And I want you to select a messenger, some man you would ordinarily choose, to take this dummy package to the mine."

"But the real money?"

"The real money I want you to carry, Mr. Lennox. I want you to take that and to follow the other messenger at a decent interval, say an hour later. If there is to be a second robbery, let it be that dummy package. The company at least will be protected."

Lennox considered. He nodded slowly. "That's a good idea! I'll find a messenger."

"But first watch me seal these packages," Markman urged. "I want a witness."

The packages were made up, each covered with the same quality paper, tied the same and sealed with the red wax. On one seal of the package containing the real money Markman made a slight, scarcely noticeable imprint with a coin. "So we won't get them mixed and fool ourselves," he smiled. "And now, if you will find your messenger and bring him here for instructions, I'll improve the waiting cleaning up this mess I've made," and the detective gestured toward the manager's desk, littered with wrapping paper, stacks of blanks the size of the bills, twine and sealing wax.

Lennox was some ten minutes on his errand. When he returned with one of the clerks in the company employ Markman had the desk in order. The clerk was given one of the packages, Lennox making sure by a glance at the seal that it was the dummy. He was instructed at what hour to start for the Ajax mine and supplied with a pistol to defend himself if attacked.

When he had gone Lennox said: "That's all, is it?"

"Yes. You have the money?"

"In my pocket," showing Markman a glimpse of the package.

"Then follow your man about an hour later. I do not think the Ajax payroll will be lost a second time. If anybody does attempt to rob your messenger he's going to be a badly disappointed man when he opens that dummy package!"

"Yes," Lennox agreed, "I think this package of money is pretty safe with me."

CHAPTER FIVE

SURPRISES

THAT afternoon Ford Markman could be found in the little office of Deputy Sheriff Cowley in charge of the Ajax district. The detective explained he had just dropped in for an informal chat, pleading his weakness for "shop talk."

The telephone bell interrupted one of the detective's reminiscences. Cowley reported: "It's the Ajax mine. The payroll messenger just got there, and they found he's carrying a package of blank paper, instead of money!"

Markman reassured the sheriff, explaining the arrangement by which Superintendent Lennox would deliver the real payroll, and word was sent on to the mine. The two men drifted into further talk. An hour passed, then another hour. The telephone rang again.

"Great jumping kangaroos!" the sheriff cried after a moment's listening, "here's the devil to pay! Lennox didn't get to the Ajax mine. They got worried. Sent some men out to look for him. Found his car wrecked, abandoned, shot full of lead. He's gone! Vanished. Just like poor George Field!"

Markman was on his feet, clamping his black felt hat on his head. "Come on," he cried, "we've got to hustle. Where's your car?"

Sheriff Cowley was treading on his heels as they ran out to the waiting roadster, a battered tin affair, hard used in many such emergencies as this. The sheriff cranked the engine, leaped to the seat and started in a cloud of dust. Neither man said a word for the next three-quarters of an hour as the rattling little car bumped over a rough mountain road, swarming up the steep grades like an angry hornet, bounding recklessly at every level stretch, until finally in the gloom of the thickly forested mountainside it rounded a turn and came upon a group of half a dozen men from the Ajax mine gathered about the wreck of the car in which Curtis Lennox had driven away from Canyon.

Lennox's automobile lay at the bottom of a ten-foot embankment. The ruts in the road indicated that the car had swerved while going at top speed and leaped off the mountainside, fetching up against a boulder that crumpled it like yesterday's newspaper.

Cowley after a brief examination declared: "Somebody shot at Lennox from ambush, that's plain. Must have made him let go the steering wheel. But evidently he wasn't killed; not right at first, anyhow. No trace of him!"

"I'll bet he isn't alive now," another observed gloomily. "Fat chance after what they did to George Field!"

Quick looks passed among the group. Men shook their heads with ominous foreboding. Several felt anxiously for pistols in pockets or holsters. Others examined the rifles they carried.

The dark, silent forest of fir and cedar took on a new and dreadful significance. There was a sense of impending tragedy sharply felt.

"Boys, we've got to find Mr. Lennox," Cowley said gravely. "I know you're all game, even if there's the chance of a fight. Fight! By God, I hope there is one if it's with the dirty murderer that's been doing this work!"

A growl of assent answered in complete agreement with the sheriff.

Cowley named them over rapidly, administering the oath to each, enlisting him as a deputy. "This way!" Markman cried eagerly, bending low, stooping and darting through the underbrush. "Here's his trail. It's marked plainly!"

For another hour the posse struggled on over a steep hog-back of the mountain, down a precipitous slope into a dank, melancholy ravine where fire had swept, leaving the forest stark and desolate. Blackened trunks, nude of all signs of green, still pointed skyward here and there, and underfoot was a tangle of fallen, charred timber that made progress painful and slow.

It was astonishing how Markman guessed the trail, leading the panting men into tangles that seemed impassable, only to reveal at the last moment some means of passing.

"That detective's a regular injun guide,"

Cowley panted. "He follows a scent like a bloodhound!"

As he spoke they came to the edge of a clearing, and all gathered close about the sheriff. In the middle of the cleared land stood a small, ruinous log cabin, built years past by some homesteader. All eyed the cabin with suspicion.

"A likely place," Cowley whispered. "Probably that's where this thug's been hanging out since his last dirty work. Spread out, boys; we won't take any chances!"

Evening shadows had been thickening into dusk. As Cowley spoke a light showed suddenly from the cabin window.

"By jingo!" the sheriff whispered. "He's there! Make a wide circle, and everybody start to rush him when I whistle."

The minutes of waiting seemed endless as the men, indistinguishable shapes, glided through the shadows to points of vantage. At last Cowley whistled shrilly. There was a rush for the cabin, kicks and blows rained upon the door and it burst inward.

The first comers saw a weird sight.

Lashed fast against an upright beam, his hands and feet hobbled, was Curtis Lennox, superintendent of the Ajax mine.

And facing the intruders, unarmed and calm, stood Fred Barrington, the giant miner.

"Come in, boys," Barrington said; "I've been expecting you."

CHAPTER SIX

CONFLICTING STORIES

CURTIS LENNOX greeted the posse with a shout of relief.

"Pretty work, Cowley! And you, Markman! Pretty work, all of you. I was praying you'd make it!"

"Now, what's all this about?" Cowley demanded, his pistol holding Barrington prisoner.

"Ask Lennox. He seems willing to talk!" Barrington growled.

"Talk! You bet I'll talk," the mine superintendent cried. "As for you, Barrington, you'd better save the rest of your conversation for the jury. The courts in this state know what to do with your kind!"

"What's it all about," Cowley exclaimed. "How come you're tied up here?"

"Untie me first," Lennox panted. "These ropes are stifling me!"

Markman glanced sharply at Fred Barrington as Lennox made the request. Something prompted him to endorse Lennox's request. "Cut his bonds, Cowley," Markman urged. "Can't you see the man's half dead?"

"Keep an eye on this fellow, then," Cowley grunted, indicating his prisoner.

Lennox was freed. Rubbing his chafed wrists and ankles, the manager began briskly: "You want to know what this is about? Well, I started with the Ajax payroll. This fellow Barrington fired on me from ambush. My car was wrecked. Barrington had a gun on me when I came out of the daze I got from hitting my head in the smash-up. He robbed me of the payroll. You'll find the packet of bills in his pocket."

"Let's see about that," Cowley interrupted. He ran his hands over Barrington's clothes and brought out the brown paper package Markman had sealed with red wax that morning in Lennox's office. Markman and Lennox both identified it. Ford Markman placed the package in his own pocket with a sharp sigh of relief. "That's a worry settled!" he declared, wiping the sweat from his face.

Lennox continued: "Barrington evidently didn't care to add a second murderous assault to his record. I guess he figured poor George Field is enough! He held the gun on me and marched me through the woods to this place. Then he tied me like you see. Evidently he figured it safer to let his next victim starve to death!"

An angry murmur went about the room. Stern glances were leveled on Fred Barrington. The big fellow, his arms folded, showed no signs of emotion. He glanced from face to face, and his look was enigmatic.

"Well, that's the story," Lennox concluded. "Barrington was about to make his get-

away when you boys broke in. Thank heaven you got here!"

Cowley turned on his prisoner. "Well, Barrington? You've heard Mr. Lennox's story. Got anything to say for yourself?"

"I have," said Barrington calmly. "Lennox's story is a damn lie, every word of it. That's what I've got to say."

There was a general gasp of astonishment.

Barrington's denial was made so surely, with such calm and conviction, that it sounded startling as a gunshot. To speak as Barrington spoke a man must be armed in innocence or else the most skillful of liars.

"What did happen was this," said Barrington coolly. "I was sent to follow Lennox up the trail this afternoon. I was instructed to do that by Mr. Ford Markman there. I watched Lennox drive up the mountain—not much trouble to follow the car up that steep grade—and I saw him run his own automobile off the road and smash it against that rock. Then he tore up a lot of ground, fired a couple of bullets into the car and made it appear that there had been a desperate fight. After that Lennox started into the woods, and I followed him. I followed Lennox to this cabin, just as Markman told me to do, and stood outside the window, peeking in to see what he did. Unluckily for me, I happened to stand on a rotten stick. It cracked under my weight. Lennox discovered me before he had more than got into the cabin, and I had to defend myself against him. I got his gun away from him and tied him up like you found him. I took that payroll money out of his pocket for safe keeping, knowing Markman would come to me as he promised to do."

"Markman promised to meet you here?" Cowley gasped.

"Yes, he did. Markman managed the whole show. All I did was to follow instructions up to the time Lennox heard me outside the window. Then I had to defend myself."

"Well, what the devil was Lennox doing in this cabin?" Cowley demanded.

"I don't know. He hadn't more than got into it when he found me out."

"Well!" cried the sheriff, "that beats any story I ever heard. Sounds pretty funny to me, but it's simple enough to verify. Professor Markman, you heard what Barrington says. Is it true? Did you send him after Lennox?"

Ford Markman, who had listened carefully to every detail, smiled and shrugged. "I did not send Barrington after Lennox," he denied calmly. "I had no hand in this at all. So far as I know Barrington's whole story is an amazing lie."

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE SECRET OF THE CABIN

AS a result of Markman's denial, coming as the climax to a series of surprises and conflicting stories, several men closed around Barrington, directed by Sheriff Cowley's nod. One seized his arms and pinioned them. Another searched his clothing and found a loaded automatic pistol.

"That's mine—my gun," Lennox said quickly.

"Better return it to Mr. Lennox," Markman suggested. The superintendent examined the weapon anxiously, then glanced hurriedly about the cabin.

His glance was unnoticed except by Ford Markman. As if acting on his observation, Markman spoke again: "Mr. Sheriff, it seems to me we had better tie this fellow Barrington. It strikes me a man with an imagination as vivid as his might do something desperate when he's driven in a corner. Some of you boys bring that rope over here!"

Led by Markman, the posse gathered about the prisoner. A shout from Lennox caused them to turn, and turning, they looked with open mouths upon the mine manager.

Lennox had them all covered with his automatic.

There was no mistaking the murderous look in the superintendent's face.

The pistol in his hand glanced from one breast to another, and its round, black mouth assumed the size and importance of an open grave in the mind of each man it pointed to.

Not a word was said. There was no sound but the heavy breathing of the threatened group.

Lennox broke the silence. "Spread out, form a line," he snarled. "Step lively!"

The pistol barrel, like some magic wand, pointed from man to man, and directed his movements until they stood in an irregular line, facing him.

Lennox stepped to the first man. His left hand, with a skill that indicated previous practice, searched the man's clothing, extracted a pistol and tossed it through the open door of the cabin into the darkness. And as he worked with his left hand his right fanned the pistol across the line of prisoners, and his bright, black eyes, menacing and quick, seemed everywhere at once.

Thus Lennox worked from man to man. Each was disarmed and their weapons hurled into the darkness outside.

Markman was the last man examined. The detective was unarmed. Lennox plunged his hand into his coat pocket and brought out the brown paper package of money.

"That's better," he observed with a sneer, transferring the sealed package to his own coat pocket. He added sharply: "Stand right where you are, all of you. I'm a good wing shot. If you don't believe it, start something!"

As he spoke he backed across the cabin toward the old stone chimney. His back against this, he watched his prisoners, and they, watching in turn, saw Lennox's skilful left hand feel across the rough field stones of the mantel until it found one that was loose and lifted it out.

Behind the stone was a dark cavity, and from this the superintendent brought out a package similar to the one he had just taken from Markman. He glanced at it, nodded his satisfaction and dropped it into the pocket beside the other.

"The payroll that was stolen from George Field!" the sheriff gasped.

"You guessed it," Lennox admitted coolly. "That with what I got to-day isn't a bad haul; better than thirty thousand dollars." Lennox grinned, a cool, devilish grimace of triumph.

Then his manner became more menacing.

"You all stay right where you are, get it?" he snapped, circling slowly toward the cabin door. "When I leave this shack I'll bolt the door behind me. But don't be too darn sure I have gone away. I might just hang around outside, you know, and pick off some of you boobs if you get too restless. Get that, and get it right! Anybody that tries to leave this place before I've been gone an hour may get a surprise he won't like. And I promise you I can shoot straight."

A groan of dismay came from the chafing posse. They saw themselves outwitted, beaten, disgraced.

Lennox paused at the door. His baleful glance rested on Ford Markman.

"Some detective!" Lennox grinned. "I always figured you were overrated, like all these publicity-mad dicks that get their names and pictures in the newspapers. But you! Why, if they'd sent a regular detective up here on this case, I might have got scared and beat it with the first payroll and been fifteen thousand loser. When I saw what a blundering boob you were, I knew it was safe to stay over and double my clean-up! Detective—rats! You couldn't catch a cold. Good-by, Markman; I'd advise you to stick to trout fishing!"

Ford Markman listened meekly to this tongue-lashing. He was quite aware that Lennox's caustic remarks were endorsed by members of the sheriff's posse. These men were naturally enraged at being outwitted and glad enough to find somebody to blame their defeat upon.

Markman drooped visibly. Looking at him, Lennox fairly swelled with venomous triumph.

Then, as Lennox stepped into the doorway, Markman spoke at last. He prefaced his remarks with a mild cough that made Lennox hesitate.

"It's all right, Lennox," the detective said meekly. "I guess you're a pretty smart

crook, all right. You sort of put it over on all of us, but would you mind answering one question?"

"What question? Speak quick!"

"I suppose you intend going a long way from here. You plan to travel fast and far, I take it?"

"You bet I do!"

"Well, Lennox, travel costs a good deal these days. Would you mind telling me just what you're going to use for money?"

The mild words were like an electric shock to Lennox. He fairly jumped. "What d'you mean?" he cried. "Money! I guess I've got plenty."

"Have you?" Markman smiled gently. "Suppose you look inside those packages before you spend recklessly!"

Lennox wavered. He suspected a trick to disarm him. But he also feared the detective's words. He glanced sharply into Markman's calmly smiling face, trying to read Markman's secret thought. Fear conquered caution. Lennox knew he was quick enough with a pistol to halt these disarmed men if they started anything. He dropped the weapon into his coat pocket and brought out one of the sealed packets. Viciously he tore off paper and string. Inside was nothing but blank paper slips, the very counterfeit he had watched Markman contrive that morning.

"Double-crossed!" Lennox then gasped. "Well, there's the other fifteen thousand. I made that up myself."

"Better be sure," said Markman.

The staring crowd watched again as Lennox drew forth the second sealed package. The man was afraid. His hands shook and he hesitated to tear the wrapping, fearful of a second disappointment.

Finally he ripped the wrapping loose.

A second neat stack of blank paper slips met his eye.

With a shout of rage Lennox hurled the package across the cabin, and the white slips fluttered like a March blizzard.

And at the same instant Ford Markman leaped on the mine superintendent and bore him down.

The sheriff and his men were scarcely a second behind him. Lennox was speedily made fast.

When this had been done Fred Barrington was heard inquiring plaintively: "Say, Markman, how about me? Ain't you through abusing me now?"

"Through?" Markman cried. "I certainly am! Untie his ropes, boys." Markman hurried to the side of the big miner. "Fred," he said, offering his hand, "will you ever forgive me?"

Fred Barrington grinned. "Sure," he said, "that's all right! I knew you did it just to fool Lennox."

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE LAST SURPRISE

IT was Ford Markman's turn to triumph. The gray-haired detective hadn't a trace of petty spite in his character. He had none of the boastful pride he was justly entitled to at this moment. If Sheriff Cowley and his men had not pressed him for an explanation of events probably he would have said nothing.

When the others insisted Markman smiled almost bashfully. "It wasn't much," he began. "But I sort of owe it to Fred, after calling him a liar, to explain just how greatly he helped me in bringing this man Lennox to justice.

"I came to Canyon to find a stolen payroll and the man who tried to murder George Field. The one man who could have told me about that robbery, its only witness, was Field, and he couldn't talk. The circumstances of the robbery, the fact that the payroll messenger was known and the hour of his leaving Canyon was known suggested at once that it had been committed by some man in the company's confidence. And the additional fact that Field could not give any information made it safe for the crook to stay right here in Canyon.

"For that reason I sent for my friend, Doctor Low, the expert surgeon, and had him give out the information that Field could be cured. I knew when this was made

public that the guilty man, whoever he was, would make plans to slip out of reach. And I figured that correctly!

"And while we waited for Low I went fishing. That is, I combined fishing with business. I wanted to investigate the scene and the evidence in the case without chance of hindrance by any person who might have reasons to lead me off the track. The one man in Canyon I trusted is Fred Barrington. I trusted him because he has been George Field's chum since boyhood and because he loves Nellie Field. I was satisfied that Fred Barrington was one man, at least, who would not be guilty of that brutal, cowardly crime against Field.

"With Fred I covered every inch of this ground. I visited this cabin, which suggested itself as a very handy place of concealment for the lost payroll. And I found that money in the spot you saw Lennox uncover to-night. I took the original package with me and have it in safe keeping. But I replaced it with a dummy package, figuring that some day the guilty man would return for his loot and incriminate himself.

"Last night Lennox was with me when Doctor Low, following my instructions, announced that Field could be cured. And Lennox promptly planned to take the second payroll and make his escape. For that reason, this morning I gave Lennox a neat package of blank paper instead of the payroll—just a little trick of substitution."

Markman paused and smiled. "I think that makes everything plain," he said.

"Well, how about Fred here? How about all this mystery in the cabin?" Sheriff Cowley demanded.

"Unforeseen accidents will change the best of plans," Markman chuckled. "In this case who could foresee that there would be a rotten stick just under that window where Fred chose to plant his big feet while he spied on what went on inside the cabin!

"You see, Fred told the exact truth. I suspected Lennox the moment he told me he intended taking the payroll to the mine. Fred was sent to watch him. He succeeded until the very second before the one act that would convict Lennox of both crimes. Just as Lennox was about to take the loot of his first robbery from the hiding-place, Fred stepped on that rotten stick. As he told us then, he did the only thing possible when discovered. He captured his man.

"But that was not enough! What I wanted to prove on Lennox was that first brutal, horrible crime that came so close to murder. Therefore I repudiated poor Fred, called him a liar before you all, and arranged matters to give Lennox enough rope to hang himself. I think he did that very satisfactorily!"

It was Barrington who asked the next question after the outburst of applause had subsided. Barrington's face was anxious. "Professor," he said eagerly, "do you mean that it's all a lie about curing poor George? Do you mean he can't be cured? That he's got to stay like that all his life, like a dead man?"

Markman shook his head sadly.

"I'm afraid so, Fred! Low followed my instructions in promising a cure. It seems unfeeling, but the deception was necessary in the cause of justice. Even Low, skilled as he is, cannot help George Field, I'm afraid."

But in this statement Markman was entirely wrong.

On their return to Canyon the party was met with the news that Field had been operated on and was on the road to recovery. Doctor Low had performed another of his miracles of modern surgery. "I can promise you he will be about in time to testify against Lennox at his trial," the great specialist smiled.

Markman grasped Fred Barrington by the arm and pointed to Nellie Field by her brother's bedside in the hospital. "Go to her now," he urged. "Tell her the truth—that you love her."

Barrington colored and hesitated painfully. "I—I haven't got the nerve!" he pleaded.

"Very well," Markman said briskly, "I'll tell her!"

The detective would have made good his threat had not Barrington overtaken him and pulled him away. Driven to do it, Barrington asked his question for himself.

Evidence

by Edgar Daniel Kramer

SPRAWLED in his easy-chair before the burning logs in his shadowy study as the winter dusk settled over the city, Dapper Dan realized that his reign was at an end. The truth was wormwood to him.

"I'm at the end of my rope," he muttered. "Two months at the most is all the sawbones gives me. I'm liable to snuff out at any minute. I'm through. Rose has shook me for the Spaniard." His voice suddenly had venom in it. "He's been making hay since I lost my grip. Damn Rose and him, too! Damn——"

He jerked hideously as a spasm of pain contorted his features. He clawed at his heart for a moment and then collapsed, breathing heavily, perspiration running down his face in crazy little rivulets. Weakly he groped for a buzzer. Ere its distant tinkling died his man appeared.

"Brandy, Dilkes!" he whispered.

Dilkes filled a glass and held it to his master's lips. Dapper Dan gulped it down.

"Thank you!" he sighed. "I feel much better now."

"Anything else, sir?"

"Put a log or two on the fire and light the candles."

Dilkes fixed the fire and lit the two tall candles on the mantel and the one on the reading-table, littered with magazines and books, which Dilkes arranged in orderly heaps.

"Anything else, sir?"

Dapper Dan shook his head. Dilkes moved toward the door noiselessly.

"By the way, Dilkes."

"Yes, sir!" Dilkes paused and turned.

"You asked to have to-night off?"

"Yes, sir; but seeing that you are not well, I——"

"You may have to-night for yourself, Dilkes," Dapper Dan interrupted.

"But you are very ill, sir. Your heart, sir."

"Thanks," Dapper Dan answered with a wry smile. "It's not likely to trouble me any more to-night. I'll look for you in the morning."

"Thank you, sir."

"Good-night, Dilkes."

"Good-night, sir."

And Dapper Dan was alone.

"Two months!" he addressed his remarks to the burning logs. "That's the limit. The old doctor says I'm liable to pop off at any time, this heart of mine's so absolutely rotten. I'm due for the long, long trail, it seems, but I sure would like to square things with Rose and the Spaniard before I check

in. I've got his gun all right, all right. There must be some way. There must be!"

The logs crackled, and the fire, together with the three tall candles, filled the room with grotesque and shifting shadows. Dapper Dan continued to sprawl in the big chair, his eyes flames that smoldered.

"I'll do it!" he breathed with finality as he heard the outer door of the apartment close behind Dilkes. "I'll show Rose and the Spaniard, too, that I'm still on the job. I wonder if the Spaniard's missed his gun."

The chimes in a neighboring room were mellowly sounding midnight, when Dapper Dan slowly rose to his feet. The fire was blazing merrily and the candles were burning with steady white flames. He moved about with the utmost deliberation. Methodically he drew the heavy curtains across the high windows. Standing upon a chair, he unlocked the transom, squirmed through it and dropped into the hall. He re-entered the room and locked the door behind him. Again climbing upon the chair, he tossed the key of the door down upon the polished surface of the reading-table. The key landed upon the hard wood with a metallic clink and slid against the base of the tall brass candle-stick. Then Dapper Dan rearranged the chairs and knocked to the floor a tall vase that was standing in the deep shadows. It fell with a dull thump and split into several pieces. He started to pick them up, but then changed his mind.

"Lost in the shadows," he laughed grimly, "and he overlooked it."

Going to a cabinet, he took a thirty-eight automatic therefrom and examined it with the utmost care. The gun was fully loaded. In the drawer of the reading-table there was a box of thirty-two calibre cartridges. Dapper Dan chuckled as he stood leaning against the table and staring around the study. Then he tumbled his mop of black hair, threw off his coat and ripped his white silk shirt in several places.

"All set for the big play!" he murmured as, gun in hand, he disappeared in the corner alcove and carefully drew the curtains behind him.

When Dilkes returned the next morning he was rather taken aback to find that Dapper Dan's bed had not been slept in.

"His heart!" Dilkes exclaimed as he hurried down the hall to the study, which was located at the far end. "Maybe he's had another stroke and it's finished him."

He found the study door locked. He called, but received no answer. He sank to his knees and peered through the keyhole, but the darkness within the room screened everything completely from his searching eyes.

"Something's wrong here!" he gasped as he rose and stared around helplessly with horror-wide eyes. "Wonder what's happened, anyway," he repeated several times on his way to the telephone.

"Headquarters!" he demanded excitedly. "Police headquarters! I sure hate to drag the cops in on this, but I've got to play safe. I can't monkey with things here." His eyes were darting glances around for all the world like a frightened rabbit as he waited for his connection. "Is this police headquarters? This is Dilkes speaking—Dilkes—Chesterfield Dilkes—Dapper Dan's man. I'm speaking from the hall of the apartment. Something's wrong here. You will be up at once? In the study, I think. The door's locked. You will be right up? I will be waiting here. Yes."

He hung up and began tiptoeing up and down, back and forth, in front of the telephone.

"Why don't they hurry!" he breathed over and over again, casting furtive, sidelong glances at the locked door of the study.

"You Dilkes?" Detective Horan demanded when he and Detective Wertz arrived. "You the chap that phoned?"

Dilkes nodded.

"What's happened here?" Wertz asked.

"The Lord only knows!" Dilkes gasped.

Followed closely by Dilkes, the two detectives hurried down the hall. They lunged against the door, and the lock gave way before their weight. They stumbled into the thick shadows.

"Watch your step, Wertz!" Horan grunted. "We've got to have some light. Turn the light switch, Dilkes."

"This room is not wired," Dilkes explained.

"Huh!" Horan growled. "How'd you light it then?"

"Candles," Dilkes told him.

"Shove back the curtains, Wertz!" Horan snapped. "Dilkes, you stay there by the door!"

Wertz flung back the heavy curtains and the room was flooded with morning light. The men stared around the room with evident disappointment. A heap of ashes lay cold upon the hearth. The candles had burned out completely and the wax had run down the candle-sticks to form thick pools at their bases. The room was cold and the men shivered. The curtains of the alcove hung stiff and straight.

"Anything wrong with this room, Dilkes?" Horan suddenly whirled around and shot his question.

"Things are out of order," Dilkes replied as his eyes roved around. "That high, cane-backed chair always sits to the right of the alcove. It's by the table now. The leather easy-chair is regularly by the fire instead of by the window. The reading-table is a little out of position, too."

Horan strode across the room and tore aside the curtains of the alcove.

"Good Lord!" he ejaculated, his breath almost choking him as he recoiled from what he was seeing.

Wertz and Dilkes rushed to him.

"Dead!" Dilkes cried. "He's dead!"

Dapper Dan lay sprawled on his back on the heaped-up cushions. His eyes were open and glassy. Blood had hardened upon his face as it flowed from the bullet hole in his right temple. Near his right hand, as though it had slipped from the clutch of his dying fingers, lay the thirty-eight revolver.

"Dapper Dan's gun?" Horan demanded, taking the automatic and thrusting it in front of Dilkes's eyes as the curtains again fell into place with a silken rustling.

"It is not," Dilkes answered after carefully going over the weapon. "I never laid eyes on this gun before." He paused, then seemed to remember something. "Besides, I took Dapper Dan's gun, a thirty-two, to be fixed just yesterday afternoon. Something was wrong with the chamber."

"Where'd you take it?" Horan asked.

"To Link's place on Conway street."

"We'll have to check that up." Horan turned to Wertz, who nodded.

Horan went over the gun very carefully, running his right hand through his grizzled hair the while.

"I've seen this pea-shooter before," Horan mused. "Where? That's the question."

While Dilkes looked on the detectives went over the room, searching it thoroughly. Wertz found the broken vase.

"How'd this get broke?" he asked.

"How?" Horan echoed.

Embedded in the hard wax at the base of the candle-stick on the table they found the key to the door.

"Door locked and the key on the table," Wertz muttered. "Door locked from the inside. Looks like suicide to me."

"Looks that way, but"—Horan swung around to Dilkes—"where were you when all these doings took place last night?" he blazed, stepping forward as though to attack him.

"I had the night off," Dilkes explained, "and I was with friends in Overlea until about two hours ago. I had breakfast with them."

"When'd you leave last night?"

"I left Dapper Dan before the fire in the big leather easy-chair a little before eight," Dilkes replied. "The City Hall clock was just striking eight as I waited for my car. I went directly to the Warren house."

"We'll check that up, too, Wertz," Horan snapped, "and in the meantime you may as well bring in the Spaniard. Get him quick, and be quiet about it. Mum's the word. Bring him here. See?"

Wertz nodded and was gone. Horan continued to go over the room, while Dilkes looked on with hurt eyes.

Wertz soon entered with the Spaniard.

"Where were you last night?" Horan greeted the Spaniard pleasantly.

"What's the meaning of this outrage?" the Spaniard demanded, his dark eyes

ablaze and his swarthy cheeks flushed. "Why am I dragged here?"

"Where were you last night?" Horan repeated, ignoring the other's perturbation.

"In my apartment, if you must know," the Spaniard flashed back. "I intended to leave town this morning. In fact, I was on the way to the station when this pinch took place. I was in my apartment last night. I wanted a good night's rest."

"Leaving town, eh?" Horan queried.

The Spaniard was trembling with rage.

"Any one with you last night?" Horan questioned.

"I was alone."

"You can prove that?"

"There's no need to prove it!" the Spaniard snarled. "I was in my room. I was alone. No one saw me. Proof? Bah!" He snapped his fingers.

"Your gun?" Horan demanded, suddenly flashing the weapon from behind his back.

"Yes," the Spaniard replied without hesitation.

"What's it doing here?"

"You're as wise as I am on that point," the Spaniard sneered. "That gun was stolen from my rooms just two days ago."

"Stolen, eh?" Horan chuckled.

"What's this game I'm up against, anyhow?" the Spaniard queried.

"Dapper Dan's dead," Horan told him, "and you're under arrest for murdering him. Not much lost in Dapper's going," he added. "Makes life a whole lot easier for us chaps. You've really done us a good turn, but you've killed him, and you've got to pay. The law's the law. That's justice."

"If you're trying to kid me," the Spaniard growled, "this is what I call one bum joke."

"Listen, son," Horan went on, "Dapper Dan's back there with a bullet through his head." He jerked a stubby thumb over his shoulder. "We know that you and Dapper were at loggerheads. There's not much that gets by us. We know that a woman's at the bottom of it, too, and that her name is Rose. See?"

"No! I don't see!" the Spaniard snarled.

"Well, I'll open your eyes, son," Horan continued monotonously. "I've got this whole little seance you staged here all doped out. To me it's as plain as the nose on your face. Let me freshen up your memory a bit. Last night after Dilkes went out you showed up here. You were a fool, for Dapper Dan was due to go West soon. Bad heart. See? We knew that, too. Anyway, I'd say you popped in here about midnight. How do I know? I figured that from the wax that had buried the key at the foot of the candle-stick on the table there. You and Dapper had a scrap. The broken vase, the table bumped out of place, the chairs out of their regular positions, Dapper's disheveled condition—all point to that as plain as day. You tried to straighten things out after the rumpus, but you mussed the play. Anyway, in the mix-up you croaked Dapper. You tossed his body into the alcove. Your gun had been stolen, according to the report you had circulated. Dapper had got hold of it, stole it. See? You poke the gun in his hand and make it appear like suicide. Clever, eh? You put things to rights to cover up the scrap, overlook the broken vase in your haste, get the chairs in the wrong places, lock the door from the inside, scramble through the transom there, toss the key back here on the table and beat it. See? Here's the scratched surface where the key fell when you tossed it back. The transom's marked up, too, where your shoes scraped when you wriggled out into the hall. You have pulled a lot of clever stuff, but it's no go, son. There's no powder smudge on Dapper's temple where the bullet got him. Suicides hold the gun close to make sure. See? You have croaked Dapper Dan all right, all right, but the bullet that got Dapper is going to snuff out the Spaniard, too. This is your finish, son. We really owe you a vote of thanks for copping two bad birds with one bit of gun-play. It's the chair for you as sure as my name's Horan. Got anything to say?"

But the Spaniard merely ground his jaws together in helpless rage as he realized how hopelessly he was entangled in the net of Dapper Dan's weaving. With a gesture of defiant bravado he held out his hands, and the bracelets upon his wrists clinked musically as the detectives led him away.

The Midnight Shadow

by Joe Burke

CHAPTER ONE

"DUAL personality is a fact. I'm not citing the Hyde and Jekyll fiction—facts, plain facts."

Headquarters Detective Sloan was the speaker. The time was one morning in the early summer; the place, police headquarters, Boston, Mass.

Sloan, although a good officer, was the type who wanted his calling known, and cried it from the house-tops. Every law violator around the "Hub" knew him—and feared him. His attire was also in accord with his profession: somber clothes, derby hat, and square-toed shoes.

His companion, Detective Jack Mullaly, was younger; unlike his co-worker, he was quite fashionable. Lithe of figure, faultless in dress, he was dubbed the "dandy" of the department.

These two men so singularly different were fast friends, and until the new chief took command they were buddies in police duties.

"I agree with you there, Sam, but how about this stuff that Professor Newcomb was speiling the other night at instructions, 'bout every human being having a counter part in the world. 'Just like twins,' he expressed it. It don't seem possible, unless they are twins."

"Oh, yes, Jack," returned his friend. "Remember the Simmons case? That's when we were pounding the pavements in harness. That bird——"

Their discourse was interrupted by an oath, and a bald pate arose slowly from behind a large roll-top desk in the corner, not unlike the moon coming up at twilight.

"You fellows will be *pounding* the pavements again if yer don't show more speed and do less gabbing," growled the owner of the bald head. "I'm sick of these chair-warming powwows. Show signs of life, and bring in the guy that's got the city on tenterhooks with his robberies. And you, Mullaly," he bellowed with some heat, "I'll break you if you don't let up hounding the bootleggers and go after that night prowler whom we've dubbed 'the Midnight Shadow.' The uniformed department and the dry agents will look after the hootch end of it. So you keep out! That is orders, remember, and I'm the boss of this outfit. Get out, both of you!"

When the door closed behind the two astounded detectives the chief's piggy eyes blazed with hatred.

"That d—— dude 'ill crab everything if I don't break him," he growled.

Chief Furbar was a new appointee from the uniformed police of the city. He had risen from the ranks—not on his merits—to the billet of precinct captain. Then, when the old chief was retired on a pension, politics being in the ascendant, his promotion was meteoric.

He was an arrogant individual of middle age, short of stature, and inclined to stoutness. His round, florid face and piggy eyes were an index to his avaricious soul. The illicit traffic of narcotic drugs and moonshine liquor and numerous other violations of the law in his district when he was captain gave the press plenty of material to clamor for his removal. But corrupt politicians were the power behind his throne, and when he was "removed" it was to the highest office on the detective force.

From the very beginning he was unpopular with his subordinates. In fact, a few plain-clothes men had petitioned, and been passed on with favor, to go back to the job of patroling a beat. Detective Jack Mullaly was the centre of his dislike. The young officer had been active in apprehending and convicting several prominent men in the bootlegging "trust" under the very eyes of the police in Furbar's late precinct. The animosity was mutual, and the chief in various ways undertook to humiliate him by detailing him to assignments of investigating minor misdemeanors. Although the detective chafed under the unwarranted mean treatment, he obeyed orders, but never relaxed his vigilance as regarded his other duties.

"Don't mind him, Jack," advised Sloan when they left the station. Detective Mullaly in a blind rage had stopped when they reached the sidewalk, and with an oath had started to re-enter and "have it out with Furbar.

"That was the last straw, Sam," said Mullaly hoarsely. "I'll stay on duty today, but I'm going to write out my resignation and tender it to the board in the morning. I can't stand it, and I don't have to—that's all."

"Sleep on it to-night, Jack, and forget it."

The two friends shook hands and departed.

As an unattached detective, Mullaly's duties took him to divers parts of the city. Sort of free-lance. As he had never been ordered to investigate any of the "Midnight Shadow's" atrocities before, the indignities heaped on him that morning aroused in his mind one overpowering thought: he would go after the audacious thief relentlessly.

After dinner at his boarding house that night he sought the solitude of his cheerless room and endeavored to concentrate his attention on a book. He was reticent in his ways, never mixed with the other boarders, and when not out walking with Kate Murray, his girl, he would seek the privacy of his room or take long walks into the country. To-night there were only two fixed ideas in his mind—to go secretly into the district where the thief was operating and try to apprehend him, and then, next morning, sever his connections with the department.

Try as he might he could not read. As he turned over each leaf of the book he could see the piggy eyes and satanic face of Chief Furbar. Tossing the volume onto the table, he settled back in his chair and closed his eyes. He awoke with a start a few hours later and sprang to his feet. The room was in inky darkness and he made a light. Blinking at the clock, he noted with relief that the time was only eleven-thirty. Putting on his hat, he extinguished the gas and went out.

Twenty minutes later found him loitering idly about the obscure byways of Back Bay. Occasionally a policeman walking his beat would come in sight, but as the detective wished to keep his identity a secret, he avoided meeting them. At one o'clock the streets were entirely deserted, except for a few taxies that purred their way with belated passengers.

"Guess the 'Shadow' won't walk tonight," mused the detective at last. "I might as well beat it for home."

He emerged from an ally and ran right into the arms of a policeman.

"Well, me laddiebuck," scowled the Hibernian bluecoat, "where do ye think yer goin'?"

Taking a firm hold on Mullaly's coat collar, he reached for his night-stick.

"Hello, Sullivan," greeted the detective, smiling up into the big officer's face. "Just scouting 'round a little. How's things?"

"Well, I be blessed," laughed Sullivan, shaking the detective's hand like a pump-handle, "if it ain't me owld friend Mullaly! It's glad t' see ye, son."

After a brief conversation the detective asked:

"Who lives in the colonial residence across the street? That's some house, Sullivan."

"Sure that's the Vandersill home. It's indeed a foin place I'd be tellin' ye."

The widow of the late Sherman Vandersill, millionaire clubman and idler, was an eccentric matron of doubtful age. Her household consisted, excluding herself, of a butler, maid, and a cook. When Vandersill died she converted her summer home at Newport, her automobiles, and her steam yacht into money. That left her only the spacious residence of her forefathers, where she lived the year around in seclusion.

Consulting his watch, Officer Sullivan, noting that the time was at hand for him to call up and report to the station-house, bade the detective good-morning and went his way.

As Mullaly was nearing his boarding-house he stepped into an all-night lunch-room to get a cup of coffee before going to bed. Climbing atop of a stool before the counter, he looked about for the waiter. Not seeing him, he rapped sharply on the counter and turned to peruse a daily newspaper.

"Whatcha gona have?" snarled a voice standing over him. The speaker's approach had been so feline-like that Mullaly was startled; then he slowly raised his eyes.

"Hello, Roach!" he exclaimed. "Glad t' see you on th' right road again. Gimme a coffee an' ham sandwich."

The man the detective called Roach gulped back an oath and glared at him sullenly. Then, forcing a sickly smile, he turned and filled his order.

Chick Roach was an ex-convict, recently paroled from Charlestown, whose specialty was that of pickpocket and sneak thief. Detective Mullaly had been his Nemesis when he played his contemptible pilfering, and was the man that prosecuted and sent him to prison.

When the detective's trim figure had left the smelly lunch-room and again headed for his boarding-house, the ex-convict's amicable smile dropped like a mask. His ratty eyes blazed forth the virulent hate in his craven soul.

"Right road, is it?" he hissed. "I'll get ye some day!" He hurled the cup and plate on the floor, kicked the pieces under the counter, and shuffled into the kitchen.

CHAPTER TWO

DETECTIVE MULLALY awoke late that morning. He hurried into his clothes and went downstairs to breakfast. Mrs. Carney, the boarding mistress, greeted him with a smile. His wan aspect aroused the motherly instinct in the kind, elderly woman as she looked down at him while he sipped his coffee.

"You're wearing yourself out, Mr. Mullaly; that's what you're doing. You'll excuse me for saying it, but for the last two months you haven't been in your bed till near mornin'. You can't stand that, sir; it'll pull you down."

"Thanks for the advice, Mrs. Carney, but as I'm going to quit the force you'll be losing your boarder soon. I wrote out my resignation when I came in this morning, so it'll be me for chauffeuring again."

"Well, well! That's too bad." She was still bemoaning when the detective left the house, and he evaded her question as to the motive for his resolution.

When he entered headquarters ten minutes later his keen perception apprised him that something unusual was in the air. Chief Furbar scowled at him from behind his roll-top desk as the young officer saluted and stood at attention. He was about to inform his superior of his intention to

quit, and was reaching for the paper in his pocket, when an ejaculation from Furbar stayed his hand.

"This 's a deuce of a time t' show up! Who do you think you are? Eh? Would ya like t' know that the 'Shadow' put another one over on you sapheads last night? Well, he did! Vandersill's——"

"Vandersill's robbed?" repeated the detective, aghast.

The chief eyed him narrowly, his glance searching Mullaly meditatively.

"I didn't say so, but it's a fact," he sneered. "How'd you know it? 'Tain't in the papers."

"I didn't know it, sir; I just surmised it."

Mullaly's face was white. He clinched his hands and bit his lips to keep in restraint the torrent of angry epithets that arose in his throat. All thoughts of leaving the service was entirely obliterated from his mind in those fleeting seconds. Mrs. Vandersill's house robbed under *his* very nose! "God!" he thought. "If Furbar knew that."

He was now aware that he was attracting attention. He could feel the chief's eyes boring his inmost thoughts. Pulling himself together, he asked with a flash of his characteristic brusqueness:

"Do you want me to continue on the case, sir?"

"Yes," replied Furbar contemptuously. "You and Sloan there go to it. You'll fall down, of course. Then I'll send a couple of boy scouts to take your place!"

A trim little maid answered the bell at the Vandersill residence. Sloan, who was standing nearest the door, displayed his badge and stated his business.

"We're from police headquarters and would like to see Mrs. Vandersill. This is my side-kick," he grinned, inclining his head towards Mullaly, who stepped into view.

The maid gave one look at Detective Mullaly, uttered a feminine squeal, turned and fled.

"Hah—hah!" laughed Sloan. "Now, what's th' matter with that skirt? Gosh, Jack, I didn't think you was as homely as all that."

"Ah, shut up!" snapped Mullaly. His nerves were now stretched to a breaking point from his mental endurance the past month.

They found their way into a large room that opened from the main hall, lowered themselves into chairs, and waited.

Neither men spoke after they had seated themselves, one chuckling inwardly, the other grim and uneasy.

The clang of the patrol auto gong awakened them from their reverie. Both detectives, impelled by professional instinct, arose and walked to the window. They wrinkled their brows perplexedly as the wagon stopped before the house, and involuntarily turned inquiringly to each other, when to their intense amazement a squad of policeman in charge of a sergeant tumbled out and surrounded the house. The sergeant and two officers mounted the steps and rang the bell.

Then heavy steps could be heard in the hall and a timorous voice saying:

"They're in that room, officers."

"Stick 'em up!" was the surprised command that greeted the detectives, who whirled at the order. Framed in the doorway was Sergeant Hicky and two patrolmen, their guns leveled on a line with their heads.

"Well, I'll be blowed!" cried Hicky, lowing his gun. "What the devil kind of a joke is this? Call in the man Brown," he ordered, turning to one of the men at his side.

As the light in the room became more distinct he had recognized the detectives.

"What does this mean, Sloan—Mullaly?" asked Hicky, when the squad was gathered in the room. "The station got a call a few minutes ago that two men called at the house and said they were from headquarters. The one speaking went on to say that——"

"They lied!" finished a voice in a cold, even tone.

Every eye in the room was turned towards the speaker, who was now in the room, her frigid, accusing stare fixed steadily on Detective Mullaly.

For several seconds there was an uncanny silence in the room. The ticking of the

clock on the mantelpiece could be heard above the stertorous breathing of the astounded men, who gazed spellbound at the woman.

"Do you know these persons, sergeant?" questioned Mrs. Vandersill, turning to Hicky.

"Why, yes, madam," he articulated. "Sure I do. Both of these men are headquarters detectives. Why? What's wrong?"

"So," she said frostily, her lips curling in a supercilious sneer. "*Both* detectives. Then it is plainly seen why the taxpayers of this city are *compelled* to suffer loss of money and property. "To think," she went on, her voice raising in a crescendo, "that the time has come in the twentieth century when the minions of the law, paid to protect our lives and homes, are a gang of thieves cloaked by their symbol of office!"

If a bomb had burst among the listeners it would not have caused more consternation. To the last man they were tense and hostile. This woman had openly smirched the honor of the department, and they represented it.

"That's rather a broad statement, Mrs. Vandersill," resented Detective Sloan. "I for one demand that you explain. What do you mean by those words?"

"Just what I said!" she flung back at him. "Let that person there"—pointing a long, tapering finger at Detective Jack Mullaly—"deny that he's the thief that robbed my house last night and threatened the lives of my maid and myself if we made an outcry!"

"What!" came a chorus of angry gasps. "Why, madam, your——" began Sergeant Hicky.

"Silence!" she cried, throwing her head back and stamping her foot. "That's the thief that robbed me and threatened my life—I repeat—and I order his arrest!"

All during the dramatic scene Detective Mullaly had been silent. Now with blazing eyes he stood before her, angry and rebellious.

"You—you," he sputtered, his face twitching convulsively, "you dare to make that grave accusation? You're mad——"

"Soft pedal there, buddie," cautioned Sloan, who had stepped to his side and placed a hand gently on his shoulder. "She's playing hookey from the bughouse. Come on, she don't want a policeman; it's her keeper she's looking for. She'll think you're Napoleon next."

Reluctantly Mullaly allowed his friend to lead him from the room. Blind with rage at what she deemed an insult and miscarriage of justice in allowing the accused detective to go at liberty, she faced the sergeant with flaming eyes.

"For the last time I order you to arrest that man!" she screamed, beside herself with rage. Her cloak of arrogance had fallen from her now.

"'Tain't regular, madam. You'll have to lay your charge before the commissioners, an', believe me, you'll have to *prove* your charge, too. Come on, boys, let's get out o' here."

On his way back to headquarters Detective Mullaly was strangely silent. Why for the past month had he been made the "goat" of the department? What did it all mean? First, the new chief's unwarranted dislike for him. Then Mrs. Vandersill's extraordinary charges.

"Say, Sam, what does it all mean?" he asked his partner.

There was a despairing note in his tone that he could not hide.

"Cheer up, Jack. We'll scrape th' bottom of this before we're done. I don't say that crook, Furbar, is mixed up in this, but I know he'll be tickled pink, blast him!"

CHAPTER THREE

MRS. VANDERSILL had her charge to prefer when she was ushered into the sanctum of the police head. Chairman Middleton heard her through, then swiveled his chair around and confronted her.

"I must tell you frankly, madam, that there is only one charge that I will lay before the board. That's the Mullaly case. The others—such as conduct unbecoming of an officer, neglect of duty, and so on—my

colleagues would not sustain. You must remember, madam, that a policeman is a human being, and has his cross to bear like the rest of us. So bring your witnesses and we'll thrash out your charge. Good-day, madam."

The day set for the hearing broke clear and bright. Without not a cloud marred the serenity of the perfect day. Within, except for a stray shaft of sunshine peering beneath the half-drawn shades, gloom was supreme. Mrs. Vandersill and her maid testified under oath that Mullaly was the man that entered the house, robbed it, and flourished a revolver in their faces. Cross-questioned by the detective's attorney, Warren Mitchel, the "law and order" candidate for district attorney, failed to shake her testimony. Other victims of the midnight marauder tried to identify him also. Officer Sullivan reluctantly told of his meeting with the detective the night of the robbery, and mentioned the place where he saw him. Damning evidence for the accused, as Chief Furbar had previously asserted that he had not detailed him to that duty, which was a lie. "Special officers from that precinct were working on those cases," he told. Of course Mullaly was a detached detective and could roam at will. But was it a coincident that he should be prowling around there that particular night? Then there was Chick Roach, the waiter in the all-night lunch room. He told of the detective drinking several cups of coffee and how nervous he acted. The department knew what a mendacious rascal he was, but his testimony was entered as evidence. Mrs. Carney was the next one called. She told, between tears and sniffing, about the lateness of the hour the accused officer arrived home on the night in question. And then, poor soul, they pumped her into telling the trial board of other nights that he never got in until the wee hours of the morning. Kate Murray, his fiancée, was the last to take the stand. She intrepidly protested his innocence, denouncing the charge as a frame-up and the witnesses as a pack of liars. She tried to make the board believe that he had spent most of his evenings with her. She was summarily warned, and that ended the evidence put in for and against the defendant. Detective Mullaly was then sworn. Clear and incisive he related how Chief Furbar's taunting innuendoes, deprecating his ability to capture the "Midnight Shadow," had aroused his ire. How, spurred on by the unwarranted insults, he went that night on his lone vigil. How he wrote out his resignation that morning, intending to tender it that day. How he delayed doing so when he was detailed to investigate the robbery that he was now accused of.

His room had been thoroughly searched, but nothing was found that would involve him in the crimes named. But Mullaly, they knew, was a clever detective, so why not a clever thief? There were a hundred-and-one places he could secrete the loot. There was no use trying the pitiful human tragedy designated as "the third degree" on him. Guilty or not guilty, it would prove fruitless. Every man at headquarters admired and respected Jack Mullaly.

No friends came forward and accounted for his nightly wanderings. The result was that the trial board found probable cause, and dismissed him from the service. A warrant for his arrest was immediately sworn out, charging him with robbery, and he was taken into custody before he left the board room. After a hearing in the lower court he was held in a substantial bail to await the finding of the grand jury.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE superior courtroom was crowded the day of the trial. A week before the grand jury had returned a true bill against Ex-Detective Jack Mullaly.

The trial was short, no new evidence presented for either the commonwealth or the defendant. The evidence of the witnesses was a repetition of that which was offered at the police board trial. If anything, the State scored.

"In view of the evidence presented and the singular fact that the robberies has ceased entirely since the arrest of the defendant," finished the brilliant district at-

torney in his closing charge to the jury, "your duty looks clear enough, gentlemen."

"I'll admit that the evidence presented and the closing remarks of our learned district attorney," finished Warren Mitchel, the detective's lawyer in his address to the jury, "looks damaging to my client. But," he rallied eloquently, "aside from the possibility of the same being a coincident, could it not be possible also that the real culprit was playing a game of his own? You know, gentlemen, that a police officer has many enemies. The average crook won't fight him in the open. But," he thundered, "let a detective or a patrolman get in trouble, then watch for some dexterous moves from the underworld."

"Guilty, with a recommendation for mercy," was the announcement of the foreman less than an hour later. The district attorney moved for sentence. The venerable judge intoning a sentence of five to seven years in the State's prison at Charlestown aroused Ex-Detective Mullaly from the shock of the jury's verdict.

Gripping the rail with his clenched hands until the knuckles showed livid beneath the bronze skin, his fixed eyes stared into space. All about he could hear the hum of voices and see grave and smiling faces as the spectators filed from the courtroom. Then a sobbing at his side metamorphosed the victim of circumstantial evidence and blind justice into a belligerent demon. Whirling on the sobbing girl at his side, he folded her in his arms and kissed her fervently. Then pushing her from him, he placed his hands on her shoulders. Mental agony was shown in his face as his fingers dug into the softness of her shoulders. She stood looking up at him, while he glared wildly down on her. His hands fell away from her shoulders at last, and she swayed and sank into the arms of a court officer, who was waiting to take the ex-detective to jail. Then, with one lingering look at the girl he loved, he sprang, bowling over the officer, and reached the open window. Without turning he pushed his supple body through and leaped to the ground below.

He was nowhere in sight when the ruffled policeman reached the window. Calling assistance, they combed the streets and byways in the neighborhood, without finding any trace of the fugitive or any one who had seen him. He had completely dropped out of sight.

A dragnet was sent out to apprehend Mullaly, and a small reward was also offered for his capture. Kate Murray, stricken by her sorrow, was unconsolable for the next few days. Detective Sam Sloan was jubilant and began working zealously to establish his friend's innocence. Chief Furbar raged and walked his office floor like a caged beast, sneering at his subordinates' efficiency and calling down execration on them in general.

A week passed; then one day as Metropolitan Police Officer Culver was walking along the embankment of the Charles River Esplanade, he found a bundle containing a man's coat, shoes, and hat. A note was also pinned to the coat, which read:

"I am innocent, and this is the only way out. Good-by. JACK MULLALY."

The habiliments were identified as belonging to him. It was therefore concluded that, temporarily insane at the result of his trial, he sought relief in death by drowning. The police dragged the river for miles around, but no body fastened itself to their grappling-hooks. Then, as far as the police and public was concerned, it was a closed chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

"I UNDERSTAND you wish to employ a few men for private detective work?" said a tall, stooped-shouldered, rather shabby-attired individual to Chief Operative Tinkham, the founder and head of a flourishing private agency in the city.

Tinkham looked up at the speaker, appraising him keenly. Although he noted that his clothes were much the worse for wear, there was something about his threadbare make-up that commanded respect. His hair was long and curly and hung down low on

his forehead. His face was swarthy, but not of a foreign visage. He was not unlike one that had lived long under tropical skies. Rimless eye-glasses rested on his perfect chiseled nose, and he looked out of a pair of cold, flint-like gray eyes.

"You understand right, Mr.——" began Tinkham.

"Edwards," supplied the applicant. "Harry Edwards."

"Any experience, Edwards?" smiled Tinkham. "We will dispense with all formalities for a beginning."

"Well—no," he hesitated in his low, strident voice, "not regular detective experience. Sort of a constabulary officer in India—that's all."

"Any references?"

"Not here, sir. I can get them a little later; I'll promise you that."

Tinkham looked up into those cold eyes again. The frigid stare was melting, supplanted by a smoldering fire. What he saw there puzzled him, for William Tinkham was a physiognomist skilled in the study of the human race. Here was one man that he could not fathom by casual observation.

"All right, Edwards," he said decidedly, arising and extending his hand, "I'll put you on. I'm from the West, and it's habitual with me to take a man for what he seemingly is worth until I find out different. There's plenty of work to do; the point is—to get the right sort of men to do it. Some men look all right until it is found that they are not. Take that Mullaly case, for instance. If you're a stranger then you don't know about it. It was a police department case."

Tinkham waved Edwards to a chair, and for the next twenty minutes he unfolded the narrative as it has been told.

Through it all the new private investigator sat unmoved. If the tale of the downfall of the late Jack Mullaly interested him, he did not show it.

"And you, sir—did you think he was guilty?" Edwards asked in a low voice when Tinkham finished.

"Well, no. I can't say that I did at the time. But everything seemed to point that way from the time he made his escape from the courtroom to the present time."

"How, if I might ask?"

"This way," went on Tinkham, proffering a cigar to Edwards and lighting one himself. "When he made his getaway and then died by the water route, every one of his friends thought he went bats. But now that the 'Midnight Shadow' is on the job again, they can't help feeling that there's something queer about the whole thing. I'm sorry that Mullaly went crooked. He was a mighty good chap, and in time he'd have cleared himself. Fill out this printed form here," he finished, shoving a sheet of paper toward Edwards, "and I'll fit you out with credentials and give you a roving billet. You're a stranger, an' you might put one over on the city police by bagging the 'Shadow.' Who knows—rookies' luck," he laughed.

After some further talk the newly made detective left the office.

A light was shining through a hole in the drawn window-shade of a darkened house on the State road several hours later. Edwards, patroling the street, saw that light and entered the alley. The clock on the church near by was just tolling the hour of midnight. The detective crept slowly forward, keeping in the shadow until he was before the gate that led into the yard at the rear of the house, his suspicions aroused. Trying the gate latch, he found it locked. He smiled in the darkness as he deftly drew himself up, climbed over and alighted noiselessly on the other side. There he crouched and listened, then tiptoed across the paved yard to the door of the house. Turning the knob slowly, his jaws snapped shut and his eyes narrowed to mere slits as the door yielded. Listening intently for a fleeting second, he pushed it open, enough to allow his body to squeeze through. All was inky darkness within after he closed the door, and grave-like silence followed the roar of a passing automobile.

Gingerly he crept along the narrow hall until he stood before a flight of steps. Then he halted and stood in a listening attitude. The light he had seen came from above. What he heard wrung a low grunt from him

as he drew an automatic revolver from his pocket and started up the stairs. At the top Edwards paused and listened again. The door there was slightly ajar, and the sound was no more audible. Edwards did not tarry more than an instant, then he pushed that door open and stepped boldly into the upper hall. A pale, sickly light shone from a room several feet from where he was standing, and from within came the sound that had guided him on. Tense, alert, his eyes emitting a dangerous light, he glided to the door. There in the wan light of a single incandescent lamp stooped the form of a man assiduously drilling a safe!

"Put 'em up! Don't turn or I'll drop you!" snapped the cold voice of the figure at the door.

The tone spelled business and so did the ready gun.

Then the detective glided quickly to the cracksman's back. Jamming the gun against his spine, Edwards ran his hands over the burglar's body. Then, looking down, he kicked a revolver that lay on the floor under a table.

"Face around!" he ordered in a metallic voice. A pair of handcuffs were dangling in his other hand.

Slowly the cracksman turned as the automatic half-circled his body. Now he was face to face with his captor. And the face of the scowling burglar was a replica of the face of the late ex-detective, Jack Mullaly!

Edwards's burning eyes were glued on the face before him as his chest rose and fell. The hand that held the gun wavered slightly, then grew tense again.

"Bring 'em down slowly, and keep 'em well out!" commanded the officer. "Looks like th' invincible shadow has taken on definite shape. You sure have——"

With a snarl the prisoner leaped backwards, tearing the extension light from the wall bracket, plunging the room into total darkness. At the first move the detective fired, a blinding streak of flame cleaving the gloom like a flash from the heavens. He could hear the cracksman prowling around in the blackness as Edwards backed to the door to cut off the thief's escape by that way. Then he saw looming up on the drawn-down window-shade a moving silhouette. Again the automatic roared out its fire and lead. A curse and groan of pain followed in rhyme with the echo; then came silence.

Warily the detective with the gun advanced across the room. Perhaps some intuition warned him and held him back the scant second of time that saved his life. A knife flashed down past his face and sang by his ear like a bee in wing. It ripped the shoulder of his coat as he jumped aside, and the momentum of the body that wielded the knife carried the burglar to the floor with a crash.

When he was yanked to his feet he was safely manacled. Pushing him ahead, his captor found a switch and snapped on the lights. Sullen, the cracksman blinked at the flood of light. The detective stooped and drew the knife from the floor, where it was buried half an inch. The blade was about six inches long and the haft five.

At that instant the front doorbell rang. It was a long, hard ring, as from a hand that did not intend to be kept waiting all night.

"More bulls," growled the prisoner.

Edwards marched his prisoner to the door and threw it open, and in rushed a squad of bluecoats with drawn revolvers.

When they saw captor and captive they stopped and stared. Sergeant Hicky, who was in charge, uttered a half-articulated groan.

"God!" he exclaimed with some feeling, walking up to the handcuffed prisoner. "Mullaly, so you're alive? Why did you do it? Why? God knows it would have been better if you had ended it all in the river."

The prisoner's sullen demeanor faded and he grinned wickedly.

"Ah, tie a can t' dat chatter, sarg. Pull in yer horns, yer beefin'. Yer tink dat I'm de dick dat's wearin' wings an' playin' a harp? Well, I ain't."

Knowing looks were exchanged between the policemen as they led the captive away.

"That's my prisoner, sergeant," apprised Edwards when they were at the patrol-box awaiting the "wagon." There was a faint suspicion of fury in his eyes as he added: "I'll be on hand this morning to take him

before Chief Furbar for a grilling. People living here away for the week-end?" He nodded towards the house where he made the capture.

"Yes," said Hicky; "ain't you coming along?"

"Not just now, sergeant; I've got another call to make. S'long."

CHAPTER SIX

RUBBING his ratty eyes with a grim hand as he sopped the sticky, coffee-stained counter with the other, Chick Roach peered out at a form that stood servilely in the doorway of the lunchroom. Casting furtive glances all around him, the lowly figure shuffled into the shop. Standing before Roach, his nose twitching, his hand rubbing the organ with likewise twitching fingers, he uttered hoarsely the single word:

"Deck."

The ex-convict glared at the spasmodic one as he leaned over the counter.

"This guy's a new one on me," he thought. "But he's a 'snow-bird' all right, or at least he shows all the traits of one."

But he was a stranger, and Chick was averse to taking chances with unacquainted hopheads. But the greed for "easy" money was forever tearing at Roach's vitals, so he cautiously asked:

"Whatcha talkin' 'bout? Dunno yer."

The twitching one drew closer and peered into the ex-convict's pasty face. He winked cunningly from behind a pair of dirty, rimless eyeglasses and fingered his unkempt beard.

"Furbar sent me. I'm——"

"You lie!" snarled Roach, hurling the mopping cloth to the floor as he reached for his hip pocket.

"Straight," doggedly went on the other, unruffled by the man's hostile move. In fact, his eyes never strayed from Chick Roach's visage.

For the next few seconds they gave look for look. But Chick's eyes wavered under the unflinching gaze of the apparent drug addict.

"Furbar oughta know better dan send youse t' me. What der deuce does he care if I go t' th' pen! Got any dough? Say, what's your monniker, an' where didya blow from?"

"Sh-s-s-s," sibilated the other, "I'm known as th' Weasel. Crushed out of San Quentin las' month. Blackjacked a bird an' nearly croaked 'im. Nearly bumped off a screw dat tried t' stop my getaway."

He hunched his shoulders with a show of swagger as he finished.

Roach looked at him admiringly. All doubt was now effaced from his mind as he extended his hand to the Weasel.

"You're de goods a'right, pal; an' a bad guy at dat. I hope der screw snuffed out! How'd yar get in tow wid Furbar, eh?"

"A gum-shoe run me in as a suspect t'other day. Der chief gives me th' once-over, an' on the Q-T he gives me de high-sign. An' say, pal, he tol me t' say dat he's a little shy on kale. Tol' me t' tell ye t' slip 'em a few."

For a moment Roach was nonplused. The man confronting him never as much as batted an eyelid. If ever a man looked the genuine article, he was the "goods."

"Where's Shifty? Why didn't he send him?" There was a tint of mistrust in his interrogations.

"On a hop-bat," grinned the other.

"All right, Weasel," growled Roach, "I ain't gota pile t' send him. He's gettin' too hogish lately. Why don't he squeeze dat gug Swart? Dat Hun's gettin' rich so fast makin' 'shine dat th' banks are buildin' more vaults t' put his darby in. Den dere's French Annie, Movie-struck Liz, an' a dozen other molls dat's oilin' his fist wid clam shekels. Why don't he raise their ante?"

He spat with disgust and shuffled into the kitchen. A few minutes later he returned, carrying in his hand a small roll wrapped in greasy brown paper, and another tiny package wrapped in white.

"Here," he said, passing them over the counter. "Dat's all th' coin I can spare now. Here's yer coke, an'——"

The unfinished utterance froze on his lips.

"Thanks," smiled the bum in unison with the metallic click of a pair of staple-looking handcuffs that he snapped on the ex-convict's wrists.

"You and I are going to have a nice little talk, Roach, and you'll *talk*, mind me, or it's back to the stone house across the canal for yours."

CHAPTER SEVEN

CHIEF FURBAR had hardly seated himself behind his desk after growling a morning salutation to the few detectives gathered in the office at eight o'clock that same morning when the door opened and admitted two men.

A chorus of gasps that greeted their entry brought his bald head up inquiringly. It was his turn to gasp, and gasp he did, and his piggy eyes nearly popped from their sockets.

"Why—what——"

"Thought I'd take the 'Midnight Shadow' over and introduce him to you," said the cold, even voice of Private Investigator Harry Edwards. There was a dangerous glitter in his gray eyes that his nose-glasses could not conceal as he went on: "I nabbed him drilling a strong-box before daylight this morning in the Devonport house on the State Road. Folks all away on an outing, so he thought it'd be all jake for him."

"Well, well, well," grinned Furbar satirically, "if it ain't our fugitive ex-fashion plate and clever thieving sleuth. Well, well, and brought in by a correspondence school detective. Welcome back from the sphere of fishes and seaweed."

Then the mockery in his voice and the sneering contempt in his eyes changed, and his voice roared out:

"Here, you, Johnson and Smith, take this crook away! Lock him up and stand guard over him! He won't get away this time!" He was now shaking with the hate that was smothering him as he thundered on: "I'll make you sweat blood, you crook, before I'm done with you!"

The prisoner was looking wonderingly at the infuriated chief, then burst into a loud guffaw.

"What's the matter, old top?" he asked, his merriment nearly choking him. "You got th' bats, too? This dick's got yer all goin'. I never was a bull, an' don't wanta be called one. Sorta hurts my feelings. I'm Frisco Red, ol' top, an' proud o' it. Can that dick stuff—dis bird crabbed my lay, an' here I am—t' stay."

Furbar, who had been glaring at the man who called himself Frisco Red, broke out anew with a torrent of oaths.

"That insane gag won't save you, Mullaly; don't think it will! Your good friend Warren Mitchel, the district attorney-elect, won't help you either when I'm through with you! Take him away!"

All during the apoplectic outburst of the department head Harry Edwards never moved nor uttered a word. He slowly unlocked the handcuffs on the prisoner's wrists as the two headquarters men took him in custody. Stoically as he had listened to the chief's withering denouncement, he was now equally as quiet as his cold gray eyes looked into those of the chief.

Furbar made a gesture of impatience, and his eyes dropped as he lowered himself into his chair with a grunt.

"Well, young man," he began patronizingly, "you did very well for a novice. Of course you'll get the reward, and I'll speak a good word for you to Tinkham." He was swelling up somewhat with his importance, and he forced a fatherly smile and added: "How'd you like to be a real detective in my department—say? I can fix it, and under my training I'll make you one of the best. And, as I guess you know, a dollar's a dollar nowadays, and there's always an easy one lying around for a wise guy. You on?"

He narrowed his piggy eyes knowingly as he inclined his head towards the detectives at the back of the room.

"Those lunkheads are buried alive and don't know it. Think over what I said."

"I've thought it over," said Edwards in the same frigid tone. "I'm going to become a member of this department—within twenty-four hours."

"Eh!" said Furbar, squinting up at the speaker's face. "Oh, yes"—he shook his head cynically—"bringing in Mullaly has swelled your bean. *We* don't want detectives in twenty-four hours. Get out now, I'm busy."

"I'll not get out," retorted Edwards, registering anger for the first time since his entry, "and *you'll* have nothing to say about it. Sit down! I'll do the talking! You've reached the end of your rope, you grafter! It'll be you for the stone house across the channel, to keep company with your contemptible confederates — Chick Roach, Swart, Shifty and a dozen others that the uniformed police are rounding up at this present moment. You can't——"

"What do you mean!" cried Furbar hoarsely, arising and gripping the chair with trembling hands. His face was ghastly, his breath coming and going in quick, jerky gasps, and he swayed drunkenly.

"It isn't a lie," retorted Edwards. "I can prove it! You disgraced one man because you thought that he was learning too much about your outside game. You knew in your cowardly heart that, although the evidence against him was damning, he wasn't guilty."

"But, blast you," cried the chief, grasping a forelorn hope, "didn't you yourself catch Mullaly robbing a safe? Prove your charges, you——"

The door of the office was flung open, and into the room walked several policemen, each gripping a manacled prisoner by the arm.

"Good work, boys," smiled Edwards. "Bring over Furbar's pals; he'd probably like to give them the third degree for peaching on him."

Furbar, who was now an inert mass of hopeless dejection, waved them back. Then for several seconds tense silence prevailed. Raising his head slowly, the disloyal chief of detectives glared virulently at Edwards and sneered:

"You meddler! I'll have one satisfaction. You say I'll have company over in the stone house across the channel. You're right I will. Jack Mullaly will also wear the fashionable stripes that the State furnishes to its guests. Now, how does that strike you?"

"It don't strike me at all, you cheap crook, because *Jack Mullaly's* not going to change his style over there; he's going to change it right here."

Then with a sweep of his hand he tore the black curly wig from his face, followed by the eyeglasses and beard.

Confronting them smiling, except the bronze tint on his face, stood Detective Jack Mullaly!

"It was the only way, boys," Jack was explaining to his brother detectives, as they were wringing his hand and congratulating him; "I knew if I went to jail it might be some time before the 'Shadow' was bagged. So I made up my mind to take a chance. I knew if I once got clear of the courtroom the boys wouldn't lay awake nights planning my capture."

His eyes were misty as they squeezed his hand and patted his shoulder in mute confirmation.

"Then," he went on, clearing his throat after swallowing a good-sized lump, "I called on an old, broken-down actor that I had befriended. He fixed me up, and then I concluded to go after the 'Shadow' in my own way. I found out through the code of the underworld that Frisco Red was in Boston, so I put one and one together that he was the bird that I'd have to snare. I never saw him before, but saw his picture and I remembered that his puss did look a little like mine. He's a tough guy. Give that bird the time and a good set of tools to work with and he'd burgle his way through any armorplate steel door that ever hung on hinges. When I landed him I went after Furbar's henchmen and fist-oilers. I wrung Roach dry when I got the goods on him, and the rest was easy. S'long, boys; I must run over and see Kate."

When Furbar went to jail Jack got his job and finally married his sweetheart.

Kate is now very proud of Jack, Jr., and Jack, Jr., is more than proud of Chief Jack Mullaly. And it is also rumored that the United Brotherhood of Downtrodden Crooks has torn up their charter and gone to work.

The Detective System of a Great City

By H. MILLS

THE men who work in plain clothes are just average men. They eat, smoke and enjoy the same amusements like the rest of us, but the public generally regards the detective as a person of harsh ways and one who once he has the opportunity will act brutal. Any one who is fortunate enough to spend any spare moments in association with police detectives will find that in their quarters at headquarters or in the local police station the friendly and comforting environment is not missing and that there is, as the New York police officials declare, a "human side" to the average detective unit as well as an ugly side.

In most cities and larger size towns of the United States the detective is in close touch with the man who pounds the pavement, as the detective bureau is in most cases located in the police headquarters building or in the local police station or town hall.

Let us, kind readers, for a moment follow the coming paragraphs and obtain an inside view of the detective division of America's largest police organization—the New York police. As most of the police systems in our larger cities are modeled after the New York police, a general panorama is laid before you of the organization and workings of the detective division of the police department of great centres of population.

The change made in the detective system in recent years mark an epoch in the progress made in crime detection work. Authorities agree that the installing of detectives in precincts is a deciding factor in increasing the efficiency of the work of detectives. The following reasons are advanced by officials who are closely in touch with the detective activities in the Metropolis:

1. That it enables detectives to become acquainted with the business people as well as the patrolmen in the smaller unit (the precinct) from whom valuable information can be obtained, particularly in reference to questionable characters with whom they come in contact.

2. That it is more convenient for citizens reporting crimes or needing the assistance of detectives.

3. That detectives arrive at the scene of the crime much quicker.

4. That in various precincts a certain class of crime may be prevalent, while in the adjoining precinct an entirely different crime is the more common. Detectives thus become thoroughly familiar with methods employed by local offenders.

5. That it enables the commanding officer of the detective district and the inspector commanding the uniformed force to work together in the prevention of crime. This could not be done under the branch system, as different territory was covered by these respective commanders.

6. That it promotes better feeling between patrolmen and detectives and complete cooperation is thereby assured.

An important unit in the detective division is the bureau of criminal identifications. The bureau possesses the most complete criminal fingerprint system and files in the United States. In addition to making identifications and keeping records of criminals, the bureau furnishes the district attorney's office every day with a report on all persons on trial in the court of general sessions in which felons are tried. The district attorney is furnished every day with a report showing the number of cases held for the action of the grand jury, and where the defendant has a criminal record a copy of his record is also provided. It also furnishes

the minor courts with data of all persons having criminal records prior to conviction and after having been fingerprinted.

The bureau identifies parole violators and reports them to the parole commission. It photographs scenes of crime as required and unidentified dead bodies, photographs and fingerprints convicted offenders. It also classifies and searches fingerprint files on application from the department of licenses. The modus operandi system has been enlarged until this photographic file of criminals, classified according to methods employed by them in the commission of crime, has reached a state of wonderful completeness. This system, which originated with the New York police department, includes the photographing of the criminal in various attitudes, corresponding group photographs of criminals who operate in concert with data and records that will facilitate identification results when occasion requires.

Another link in the chain which comprises the detective division is the bureau of missing persons. The work done by this unit is more in the nature of public service and welfare than absolute police duty.

An example of the efficiency of this unit in the detective service was demonstrated at the time of the Wall Street explosion disaster on September 16, 1920, involving the death or injury of a great number of people. Much difficulty was experienced in the identification of many of those killed or badly injured; the force of the explosion tore away their clothing, leaving on their person nothing by which they might be identified. Operatives of the bureau succeeded in securing the identity of every person killed. With efficient and systematic bureaus to furnish data and information detectives within a few minutes after the explosion occurred mastered the situation.

In the bureau is kept a file containing the names of all laundries located in the city limits. This file has frequently been found of priceless assistance in the identification of persons who through temporary loss of memory are unable to account for themselves and also in case of unidentified dead. To keep this file as near to perfection as possible patrolmen report at regular intervals the laundries on their respective posts.

The bureau of lost property is a department where all stolen, lost and abandoned property which may be offered for sale or pawn to any licensed pawnbroker, second-hand or junk dealer may be located; this includes lost and stolen automobiles. Cards are received daily from these licensed dealers reporting property pledged and bought, which are then classified and filed. These are then checked against the reports of stolen goods. Detectives visit pawnshops, junk dealers' shops every day, examining the record of property pledged and bought and placing police stops on property located through records on file and investigating pledges or persons selling or pawning the property.

The narcotic bureau specializes in eradicating and combating the ever-increasing drug evil. The drug slave must have his drug, and the cash must be had to buy it, and murder will not stop him from securing it. The operatives of this bureau perform the most dangerous and important phrase of secret service work, and detectives are selected for particular qualifications and characteristic linguistic acquirements and general adaptability.

We now come to the smaller units in the detective division, the various active service squads, specially trained and skilled to successfully perform the work required in that field.

The Italian squad, detectives who speak the Italian language, are familiar with the methods of the Italian criminal. The Italian quarters are kept under close watch by the squad members, and known gangsters or questionable characters are taken into custody when the public good is best served by keeping these evildoes under lock and key.

The gangster squad is maintained for the purpose of visiting all known places throughout the city which reputed gangsters, thieves, etc., frequent.

The other squads in the detective division, namely, the safe and loft squad, pickpocket squad, truck and industrial squad, Italian squad, all contribute their specialized

knowledge to the general work of the police department whenever occasion requires.

The telephone on the chief inspector's desk at headquarters rings. A sergeant answers it:

"First precinct talking; a safe robbery is reported on Ann street. Patrolmen and detectives were sent, and report no clues to be found; couldn't even find a fingerprint. Better send a central office man down. This is Captain Sims speaking. Send him to my office first, and I'll go to the scene with him." A few seconds later Detective Smith hastened down the steps of police headquarters and made his way to Broadway at a fast gait. A taxi passing on the way uptown was hailed, and in a few minutes the detective alighted in front of the police station that covers the financial and business district of the largest city in America.

Arriving at the scene, Detective Smith carefully went over the surroundings, which was really a duplication of the work of the precinct detectives. The job was a good piece of work performed by expert cracksmen, and they evidently utilized their criminal knowledge to leave no traces behind them that would furnish a clue to their apprehension. Smith carefully noted that there was no use looking around the safe for fingerprints, as his colleagues had reported there were no signs of any.

"Let me have the story of this job, men, will you?"

"Sure."

Patrolman Holmes talking. "I was down at the Square waiting for the sergeant's flivver to turn the corner when I thought I heard a shout from the direction of Ann street. During the early morning hours it is so quiet and still in this section that a least bit of noise will attract attention, so I walked fast until I reached the corner of this street. I was just in time to see an auto start moving and two men desperately fighting, one trying to break the grasp of the other in order to reach the car. I drew my revolver and bounded forth, but as quick as a flash one of the struggling men broke away and hit his antagonist a blow on the head and dove for the running board of the moving car. I fired two shots at the man and another two shots at the car as it turned the far corner, but by the time I reached the corner the auto was speeding and almost out of sight on the deserted street. With no sign of a car to commandeer to pursue I hastened back to the fallen man and to report the occurrence. The fellow was the night watchman, and he was in the entrance lobby when he saw two suspicious-looking fellows hiking silently out the open front door. He called to them, and at that moment an auto drew up in front of the entrance, and the two made for it. The watchman, however, was on the job, and before one fellow could make the car grabbed him, and the tussle followed.

"Where is the watchman now?"

"Downstairs."

"All right, we'll go down to see him."

The watchman related the same story as the patrolman, and added that both men were masked.

"I must have torn that fellow's shirt off his back, even if I did not get him. This thirty-thousand-dollar job can't be blamed on me, anyhow."

"Come, accompany me to the street." As soon as the door entrance was reached Smith's keen eyes swept the street area, now lighted by the early dawn. He walked over to the fire pump and reached down and picked up what appeared to be a dirty crumpled rag. Smith examined it and turned to the watchman.

"Go up and tell the captain and the boys that I'll report to them later."

Detective Smith reached Broadway again, summoned a taxi and returned to police headquarters. Closing the door of the bureau of missing persons office, he took from his pocket a piece of cloth, and instructed one of the clerks to refer to the laundry file, for in his possession was a laundry mark on the half-torn collar band—a clue that will lead to the identity of the safe crackers who pulled the thirty-thousand-dollar job below the "dead line."

The clerk returned with the information that the mark was used by a lower East Side laundry. Detective Smith noted the report and called his office on the telephone.

"Is Curly there?"

"Yes."

"Tell him to meet me at the front stairs. Detective Smith talking."

Detectives Smith and Curley left police headquarters together, Smith relating the case to him, and they entered a street car bound for the East Side.

"The reason I called you Curley is that I'll need a member of the 'safe and loft squad' to help me in a few minutes."

The two sleuths arrived before a small laundry establishment not yet opened for the day's business. Searching the block, the patrolman on post was found, and the detectives got from him that the proprietor lived over the shop. The three aroused him from his sleep earlier than usual, and down to the shop he was pushed half undressed. The man was confronted with his own laundry mark on a collar band and requested to go over his records. Detective Curley watched him carefully as he tried to describe his customer, whose laundry bore the mark on the collar band.

"Smith, it's 'Tough Cohen' he is describing, but he has been going straight since he left Auburn."

"Where is your telephone?"

"Hello, police headquarters; give me Detective Sergeant Milo if he is in.

"Hello, Milo; this is Curley; do you know where 'Tough Cohen' is hanging out? This is one case where I have to ask the aid of the gangster squad."

"Let me think. Yes, Cohen and a side kick are leading a peaceful and angelic life boarding at Mother Drews at 140 ——— street."

"Fine, Milo. Listen. Smith and I are at Grand and Suffolk streets. Will you get a few of the boys together and drive to Mother Drews as soon as you can?"

"Sure, Curley; what's up?"

"Never mind, Milo; you'll see when you arrive."

Detectives Smith and Curley made their way to Mother Drews, and they noted an auto parked across the street. A knock at the basement door brought the owner herself, and she immediately recognized the officers. She reported that Cohen and his roommate had come home only a few minutes ago. The sleuths silently made their way to the door of the room Mother Drews pointed out.

Detective Curley put his hand on the knob and gave it a slight turn, and with a sudden push flung the door wide open. A surprise greeted the detectives, for the men they were seeking were fully dressed and standing in the centre of the room. Immediately Cohen turned, pulled out a revolver and fired at the detectives. Curley fell with a bullet wound. Smith jumped at Cohen, dealing him a swift blow over the right temple, which momentarily stunned him, and with a sudden follow-up struck him under the chin, knocking him backwards, causing his revolver to drop from his hand. Cohen recovered instantly and grappled with Smith, and the two engaged in a desperate tussle. Cohen's cohort, pulling a blackjack from his pocket, maneuvered to get in the rear of Smith and deliver a blow. Curley in agony over a flesh wound on his thigh braced himself against the wall, and after an effort reached his revolver. Smith suddenly flung Cohen clear from him and reached for his coat pocket. In the flash of a second Cohen hurled himself at Smith.

A shot from Curley's revolver struck Cohen in the back, and he reeled backwards, staggered against a chair and fell to the floor. With a sudden leap Cohen's partner leaped at Curley, knocked the revolver from his hand, knocked the sleuth unconscious with a vicious blow from his blackjack, dove from the door and darted down the stairs five steps at a time. As he reached the bottom the street door flew open, and before he could stop himself fell into the arms of a uniformed inspector. Plain-clothes men brushed past him, hastened up the stairs, and the Ann street safe job was cleaned up. The loot was found in a closet when Inspector Burns's men examined the room. The one thing that Detective Smith made certain to secure was the shirt Cohen was wearing. The neckband was entirely cut off, and the piece of cloth the detective had found completed the garment. It would play an important part in the evidence to send the two cracksmen to prison.

Through the Window

by Elmer J. Williams

CHAPTER ONE

DETECTIVE DEL BARTLEY, headquarter's homicide expert, had been assigned to the case alone. He faced a maze of circumstances which at once puzzled and enthralled him.

Men schooled as he was in the ways and methods of murderers are frequently dumfounded by just such a situation—every evidence of a ghastly crime, but the body cunningly disposed of.

Here was the laboratory of Clinton Price, wealthy young scientist, blood-spattered, the door bolted on the inside, one window half open, the room itself presenting appalling testimony of a terrific death struggle—but the body missing.

Bartley looked up from his study of a small, blood-stained surgeon's knife, sharp as a razor, and addressed the white-haired, pallor-stricken old butler, Roberts, who stood near by wringing his hands.

"You say that Price kept a monkey in that cage over there?" he asked.

The detective indicated a cell-like affair about three feet square, constructed on an iron frame of heavy mesh wire. It lay on the floor, the door open.

"And a wild, wicked little beast it was, too. I wouldn't be at all surprised, sir, if——"

Bartley checked the old man with another question.

"How large was the monkey?"

"A little fellow; very small, sir. Not as large as the dogs women have on chains."

"It isn't likely then, Roberts, that the monkey could have killed Mr. Price and dragged the body through that window?"

"Quite impossible," Roberts answered.

"How long did Price have this animal?"

"About a month. He was quite careful of him—fed him the best with his own hands, but he couldn't get him tamed down much. He was a vicious creature. Mr. said it was a rare kind from South America."

"The monkey was wild?"

"Quite wild, sir."

"I believe you have mentioned that Mr. Price was not married and that you know of no enemies he might have had?"

Old Roberts shook his head.

"There was nobody," he replied slowly. "He was a recluse in his way, but always quite cheerful. Not so much so since his father died. He spent more time in the laboratory since then."

"He was interested in experiments. You

say, Roberts, that he sometimes brought home some animal or other—even a snake, perhaps?"

"Quite often, sir; but we were quite used to him."

"He worked in here sometimes late at night?"

"Sometimes all night. We would have to call him out for his breakfast. Then he would sleep during the day."

"I believe that is all, Roberts."

Bartley turned again to his examination of the room as the bowed old servant shuffled out. There was not much to be gained by a cross-examination of the servants. The cook, the gardener and Roberts—there were just three of them—all were above suspicion; all stricken with grief and horror.

Price had been locked in his laboratory as usual the night before. Roberts had not gone to bed until midnight and he knew that the young scientist was in the laboratory at that time. The murder then, Bartley concluded, was committed early in the morning. The servants slept on the second floor in the farthest wing of the house, so it was quite natural that they were not aroused while the tragedy was taking place behind the bolted door downstairs.

There were three large windows in the laboratory. Two were tightly locked. The other was open half-way, from the bottom. The room itself, about eighteen feet one way and twelve the other, was scattered with débris. Besides the cage on the floor there was a litter of broken glass, test tubes and bottles which had crashed to the floor when a long rack was knocked from its position on a white-enameled bench.

Various spots were on the white linoleum where acids and chemicals had spilled. Bartley had picked up the blood-smeared knife near the window. There were a number of small blood stains on the window-sill and others visible on the floor and in blotches on the white walls.

The detective was satisfied that the murderer or murderers had used the knife. And yet this knife was the type that might well have been owned by Price. Was it likely then that the murder had not been premeditated, but by some person who in a rage seized the weapon from the white bench?

What of the little monkey? It, too, was gone. He observed that the door had a spring lock and was operated with a key. What had this animal to do with the crime?

Question after question crowded upon Bartley's mind and for all his knowledge and natural perception, he could answer none of them to satisfy himself.

So far as he could learn there had been no robbery. Yet none knew what valuables this strange young man may have kept concealed in his laboratory. Perhaps the motive for the murder was hidden here after all.

Roberts had rapped on Price's bed chamber at 7:30 that morning and receiving no answer, surmised that his young master was already at work, before breakfast. To the laboratory then Roberts went to inform Price that the morning meal was served. There was no answer to his repeated knocks.

Knowing the door to be bolted on the inside he became alarmed and called the other two servants. After much pounding upon the door they had at last forced it, and the scene of violence, bloodshed and horror met their dismayed eyes. They had notified the police immediately and thus Bartley had the first opportunity to study the evidence in the laboratory.

Having satisfied himself that he should first make every effort possible to find the body, Bartley left orders that nothing in the room be disturbed, and set himself for his task.

CHAPTER TWO

BARTLEY knew some things of the young scientist. The man was not above thirty and from all reports had been engaged, in his misanthropical way, in medical experiments—nobody knew just what.

He had only a few social connections; callers, it seemed, were merely such college acquaintances who might run out to the old house for brief visits when they were in the city.

The old home, a fine structure of the

English colonial type, was on a main highway, perhaps two miles from the city limits. The estate consisted of about fifty acres, but the old developed part of it was a few acres immediately surrounding the house, devoted to lawn and gardens, old-fashioned, but well kept and attractive.

Bartley first directed his attention to the garden adjacent to the laboratory windows. The lawn was perfectly dry, almost sun-baked, so he perceived immediately that footprints would not remain visible, even to his glass. He discovered three small blood spots directly under the open window and these served to verify his conjecture concerning the removal of the body.

But it seemed that every step he had taken thus far only served to increase his growing bewilderment. He made a complete survey of the gardens, going over every foot of them, all unavailingly. At last, hanging on a laurel bush not far from the laboratory window he found a man's cap. It was of tweed.

Perhaps seventy feet away Jerry, the gardener, was stooped over a flower bed, appearing to be absorbed in some minor task, but in reality watching with furtive glances the actions of Bartley. Now the detective beckoned to him. Jerry approached as swiftly as possible on his bow-legs.

"Do you know whose cap this is?" asked Bartley.

"It's Mr. Price's cap, sir."

"You have seen him wear it?"

"Yes. He wore it a good bit on his walks of late."

Here was something else which merely darkened the cloud. If Price was murdred after a mighty struggle, why had he been wearing a cap when he was carried from the room by the murderers? This cap had evidently been caught on the laurel twig when they were bearing him from the scene. Perhaps it had been used to smother his screams.

Dusk came after the disappearance of the sun and found the officer still at work.

If he had made any discoveries his face did not betray them as he retraced his steps in the gathering gloom to the old house. Bartley was determined to spend the night in the Price house. He went immediately to the telephone and after getting his connection talked to his superior, Inspector Rock. His report was made in short, crisp sentences:

"Yes, this is Bartley. No question about the murder. Blood stains all over the place. The fellow must have put up a stiff fight—no sign of the body. It was a knife job; the murderer left it behind. Yes, that's exactly what I want to do, chief—stay here all night and study the fingerprints. Good-by."

Bartley then notified Roberts of his intention to remain overnight. The old butler conducted him to a sleeping-room on the second floor.

"To-night," said Bartley, "I am going to work in Mr. Price's laboratory. If you have any occasion to call me, I will be there."

The servant nodded and left him.

Shortly before nine o'clock he get up from his chair. He had been dozing. The moon was bright in the cloudless sky and its effulgence flooded through the big windows of the room. He went at once to the laboratory and bolted the door behind him. With his glass and his hands gloved, Bartley went to work on the fingerprints.

It was a tiny noise, a faint scratching, which brought Bartley's eyes up sharply from the blotches of blood on the wall and caused him to narrow them, with ears alert, in the direction of the open window. His nerves were tense and his pulse clamored wildly. The sound was heard again.

Directly behind Bartley was a door. It opened into a little closet, evidently used by the young scientist as a store place for such material as he used. He slipped through this door, closing it after him until there remained only a slit through which he could peer with a good view of the open window.

When the noise again reached his ears it was more distinct. A moment later a little form, like a darting shadow from the moon-bathed garden, leaped into view. It was a monkey!

The animal sat on the window-sill, peering into the laboratory.

The monkey blinked in the light like an

owl and its little eyes shone wildly against the darkened background.

Bartley observed in a flash that one of its shoulders had been cut and the matted hair was stained by blood.

The creature seemed to be making a careful study of the room. The restless, wary eyes darted hither and thither and sometimes a sharp little glance was thrown backward into the night. At last it jumped to the floor.

Bartley could see it run to the cage across the room. Then he discovered that it was making frantic, almost comic efforts to get into the cage. It ran around the thing three or four times. Finally the animal attempted to insert its little fingers through the wire. It was quite evident to Bartley that the monkey was endeavoring to reach some of the bits of food, a half of a bun and some nuts, that were inside the cage.

Despite himself the hidden detective was almost compelled to laugh, a victim of that irresistible appeal that a monkey's antics always has for a human. An instant later the smile was swept from his face. His nerves vibrated in every fibre of his body and his right hand stole to the holster under his coat where his automatic was concealed. There had been another noise at the window.

Bartley's wait was not long. First there appeared long fingers, soiled and stained, those of the left hand bound by what was plainly a blood-soaked handkerchief. The fingers groped across the sill and fastened themselves with a grip that made them appear white under the dirt.

Tense and motionless Bartley remained behind the door, his eyes cemented upon the two hands. He was strung to a high pitch of nervous excitement, but it was the sort which is held in leash by a powerful will. His automatic slipped from its leather case and his fingers hugged the trigger. He gave an involuntary start as the face appeared in the window.

The dark eyes blazed into the room from beneath a mass of matted, touseled hair. The skin, what was visible of his face between livid red scratches and cuts, was chalky white. Bartley observed that the man's face was patched with rough pieces of heavy court-plaster. His eyes, furtive and wild, peered into the laboratory from a veritable mask of such rough bandages.

Bartley recovered himself and his finger coiled more firmly around the grip of his weapon. The haunting eyes in the window had roved around the room until they dwelt upon the little beast. Then the man drew himself half-way through the window, finally assuming a sitting position on the sill.

The monkey had not observed the man. It was still attempting to get at the bits of food. The eyes from the window played upon its every move. Bartley saw the man reach down toward the ground and pull into view a stout club.

At that moment the little animal noticed the presence of the figure in the window. Its sudden burst of screams, vicious, snarling little sounds, was mingled with a raucous chattering. It leaped to a little table and showed sharp, menacing rows of teeth.

Step by step the man who had entered the window approached the animal. He was crouched, one hand holding the club behind his back, while the other was extended, palm upward, toward the monkey, as though cajoling it with food.

The beast, however, watching ever warily, had increased its noise until the sounds almost chilled the blood of the silent spectator behind the closet door. Step by step, measuring every inch between himself and the monkey, the man approached.

In the height of his suspense Bartley had an opportunity to study the man who had come out of the night, although his back was turned to him. He wore coat and trousers of apparently good material, but they were wrinkled and disheveled. He was slightly above average height, with thin, sloping shoulders.

The detective felt that it was time for him to act.

"Don't move, or I'll blow your head off!"

Bartley's command fell in the room like a grenade.

The bloody fingers seemed to tighten around the club as the man swung around to face the unexpected voice. His wild eyes fairly protruded from their sockets. At

that moment the monkey, who must have observed the change come over the man, sprang with lightning swiftness toward the throat of the one who had menaced it. The fellow staggered back, one arm upraised to protect himself from the bared teeth, and a sharp cry of fear escaped him.

The report of Bartley's automatic was almost deafening. As the room quivered with the concussion, the little monkey dropped to the floor, drilled through its body.

As he stepped from behind the door Bartley jerked his weapon into position to cover his man. He spoke tersely.

"I would advise you not to get gay," he said. "You're under arrest."

"Arrest," his captive echoed the word.

"In connection with the murder of Clinton Price," said Bartley. "What have you done with the body?"

"What are you talking about?" came from the man finally, "I am Clinton Price!"

CHAPTER THREE

DETECTIVE DEL BARTLEY entered the office of Inspector Rock, tossed his hat with amazing marksmanship at a distant hook, and sat down in a disgusted heap. Inspector Rock, deep in solitaire, looked up with a card poised.

"Well," he drawled. "How's that Price business?"

Bartley combined a shrug and a snort:

"Monkey business," he said. "That's all."

The inspector's heavy brows were lifted.

"Locate the body?"

"Oh, yes, it was easy. I just got through talking with the corpse. Listen:

"This fellow Price is as much alive as you are. While they were preparing to hang crape on his front door he was sitting out in the bosky dells dreaming."

"About the laboratory, the knife and the blood stains, what of those?"

"Monkeys are really clever chaps. Sometimes I wonder that they don't form an organization of some sort to protest against Darwin's theory that they are even remotely connected with man. My observation in the last twenty hours has proven that the theory is a slander on the monkey. These little fellows at least have brains enough to come home when they are hungry."

"What's all this got to do with Price?" interposed the inspector.

"Patience," urged Bartley; "I'm coming to that. This fellow Price is a scientist. Just now he is a very angry one; he is particularly peeved at me because I messed over his laboratory and tramped on his flower-beds looking for his body.

"About two months ago some one shipped him a monkey from South America. Price wanted to try out some pet experiment. The difficulty was that the little South American wasn't used to taking his ether straight and didn't like the looks of a surgeon's knife. When Price started for him the monkey put up a fight. You should see that laboratory to get some notion about that fight. He made Price's face look like the comic section of a Chinese newspaper. He bit him up considerably also. The scientist made a pass with his knife and cut the monkey on the shoulder. There was a lot of stuff in the room tipped over in the scrap.

"When the smoke of battle cleared Price had no difficulty trailing the runaway. The monkey made for a nearby woods and crawled into a hollow log. As it happened, the log was open only at one end, so Price had only to play the waiting game. He was eager to recapture the animal for his own use and also he did not feel that it was safe to allow the little beast to run.

"While I was working on the greatest murder mystery of police annals Price was sitting out there waiting for the monkey to come out. It was about midnight when the poor little beast displayed his supreme intelligence. He got hungry and made a dash for it, slipping through Price's grasp. The little rascal went right back to the laboratory—the only place where he knew there was food. In the light of the moon the scientific Mr. Price trailed him back.

"That's all, Inspector, except that I shot the monkey and Price is raving mad and threatens to make us pay for the loss of his pet."

The Paper Clue

By WARREN W. VAN GORDEN

PART TWO

CHAPTER FIVE

THE clock was striking eight as Burke presented himself at the employment office. Here he was given a time card and a note to a Mr. Miller, who had charge of the display department for the store.

It seemed that Mr. Miller had received his orders, for after reading the note he said:

"You can go wherever you like, Mr. Burke. If the floor men stop you just tell them that you belong to the display force. Better take along a bunch of flowers."

"Thanks. That's a good idea," agreed Burke as he secured a bunch of artificial flowers and a small "T" stand. Leaving the office, he started on a tour of inspection.

Approaching the counter where Miss Randall was employed, he saw that she was hard at work getting her counter ready for the day's business.

"You're right on the job, I see," she observed as she glanced at the flowers and stand he was carrying.

Looking down into the winsome face of the girl before him, he came to the conclusion that he was a fool to even think that she could be implicated in the affair.

"I'm on the job, all right," he retorted, "but I scarcely know where to start in."

"Oh, you'll get located after a bit. I'll help you all I can. I guess you'll need it in time," said the girl with a peculiar smile.

Did the girl know who he was and what he was there for? Aloud he said: "I'll hold you to your word. I shall depend on you to help me out when I need it. By the way, will I see you in the subway to-night?"

"Perhaps," she murmured with a teasing smile.

A customer came up and stood waiting, so Burke moved quietly away.

Going from department to department, he at last arrived in the shipping room. Passing on, he entered the room used for the baling of waste-paper.

"Just as I thought," he exclaimed aloud, as he saw several large bales lying on the floor.

No porters were about, so he went quickly to work. With a sharp knife he slit open the heavy cardboard on the outside of one of the bales nearest him. Pushing his knife through the opening, he prodded around. The bale was filled with tightly compressed paper.

Disappointed, he walked over to another bale. Here he performed the same operation, using considerable care in the cutting. A low whistle of amazement broke from his lips as the severed cardboard came apart in his hands. The inside of the bale was packed full of small bolts of expensive silks.

Burke had just pounded the cardboard back into place when a man wearing the brown uniform of a porter entered the room. Nodding to the man, he started to open a door in the wall directly back of the baling machine.

As Burke turned the knob the porter laid a restraining hand upon his arm, saying:

"You can't go in there!"

"Why not?" demanded Burke.

"There's nothing in that room but waste-paper," explained the man. "That's the paper chute. There's heavy cardboard boxes and other rubbish coming down there all the time. You might get hit on the head with a heavy box."

"How do you get the stuff out then?" questioned Burke sharply.

"We have to wait until the noon hour or after the store closes, when everything is quiet."

"I see. Must keep you rather busy?"

"Yes, sir. It's quite some job," declared the man as he broke up a long sheet of cardboard and tossed it into the baler.

"How much does one of those bales weigh?" inquired Burke.

"Some weigh in the neighborhood of one hundred pounds. Others more. You see, it's according to whether the bale is filled with paper or of cardboard and the like. The paper presses down more, so the bale that is most all paper would weigh the most," explained the porter.

"Where do you sell the bales?"

"We have a firm that takes the entire lot."

"What's the name of the firm?" asked Burke, watching the man closely.

"I don't remember the name of the firm," mumbled the man as he hastily threw another box into the machine.

"Well, I guess I can find out at the office if I find it is necessary," observed Burke as he turned to go.

"Are you a new man here?" inquired the porter as he wiped the perspiration from his face with his coat sleeve.

"I've been here about seven months," lied the detective. "I'm in the display department."

"That probably accounts for my not seeing you before," said the porter with evident relief.

"Now to wind up the loose threads," thought Burke as he left the room. "I think I'll take a run down to police headquarters and arrange a little show for my friend and well-wisher, Mr. O'Flannagan."

CHAPTER SIX

IT was about five o'clock in the evening when Burke arrived at the store, and he hurried in towards the elevators. As he passed the counter where Miss Randall was employed he saw her wave her hand and motion for him to come over.

"Here's something that you'll be glad to get, I think," she said as he came to a stop in front of the counter. She held out her hand.

"What is it?" asked Burke as he put out his hand.

"Mr. Delmar, the floorwalker in the silk department, dropped it a while ago. Hurry! Here comes the boss. You'll understand when you read it. She dropped a small ball of paper into Burke's outstretched palm.

With the paper in his hand Burke walked on to the rear of the store. While waiting for the elevator he inspected the tiny scrap of paper which the girl had given him. Smoothing it out, he discovered that it was a piece of heavy brown wrapping paper which had no doubt been torn from an express package. It was covered with coarse writing. Burke read the note at a glance and, whirling about, rushed from the store in great haste.

Late next morning Burke entered the store, a smile of triumph upon his face. Halfway down the aisle he came face to face with O'Flannagan. The man greeted him with a smile.

Burke was at a loss to account for the change in the store detective's manner, but his next words made it clear.

"Come up to the office, Burke. I told you that I'd lay my hands on the parties responsible for these robberies."

"You have the guilty party, then?" asked Burke with a queer smile.

"You bet I have," answered O'Flannagan pompously.

As the two men walked into the office the general manager looked up inquiringly.

O'Flannagan broke out excitedly:

"Mr. Freeze, I wish to report that I've succeeded in catching the thieves red-handed. I'm bringing them in here to confess."

The general manager whirled around in his chair and sputtered:

"How about it, Burke?"

"Let O'Flannagan do the talking," retorted Burke.

O'Flannagan, who had left the room, returned, leading Miss Randall by the arm.

Burke swore softly under his breath.

"Of all the infernal idiots, he beats them all," he added.

Miss Randall looked as if she had been crying, but as he saw the men she lifted her head proudly.

"Who is that girl?" snapped the general manager.

"I thought you'd be surprised," observed O'Flannagan. "That girl is known as 'Smiling Nell,' and is one of the cleverest shoplifters in the country. She is wanted for the robbery of——"

There was the sound of voices raised in anger in the outer office.

"What's that rumpus?" jerked out Mr. Freeze.

"Bring him in here," called O'Flannagan.

In a moment there appeared two burly policemen, dragging between them a man dressed in brown overalls.

Burke drew in a sharp breath as he saw that the man was the porter who did the baling of waste-paper. He said nothing, deciding to wait and see what O'Flannagan's next move would be.

"Now," snarled O'Flannagan, closing the door and turning the key in the lock, "we'll get down to brass tacks. I've had my eye on this girl ever since she started work in this store. She was always leaving her department and snooping around. This morning I caught her in the act of lifting a fur coat. She's 'Smiling Nell," all right. She fits the description to a 'T.'"

The general manager looked incredulous.

"She wouldn't have a chance in the world of getting out of here with a fur coat," he exclaimed in disgust.

"Wait a minute! I'll explain that and a good deal more," cut in O'Flannagan.

"All right. Go ahead," answered the general manager testily.

"You know," went on O'Flannagan, "there's a waste-paper chute that carries the waste into the baling-room. Well, this girl nails a coat, and when she thinks that no one is looking drops it down one of the chutes."

"I can't see what good that would do her? She couldn't remove it from the receiving-room without being caught," broke in Mr. Freeze irritably.

"What did she take the coat for, then?" snapped out O'Flannagan, getting red under the collar. "Anyway, I caught her in the act. That proves that she's guilty. This man here," pointing at the porter, "can tell how the stuff was removed. As soon as I saw the girl drop the coat into the chute I beat it for the baling-room. I was just in time to see him picking the coat out of the rubbish." O'Flannagan paused and cleared his throat.

"What happened then?" came from the general manager impatiently.

"Soon as he saw me," went on O'Flannagan, "he dropped the coat and begged me to let him go. Put up a hard luck story and all that rot. Afterwards he denied it, but I guess a little third degree will make him talk more to the point. He's the girl's accomplice, all right."

"I never saw the man before," exclaimed Miss Randall indignantly.

"No, of course not," spat out O'Flannagan sarcastically. "However, it's time to end this farce. If there's any more talking to be done, let them do it at police headquarters."

As the officer laid his hand on the girl's arm she shrank away, looking at Burke appealingly.

"Hold on! Just a minute!" said Burke, deciding that it was time to interfere.

"Well, what now?" snarled O'Flannagan.

"Before you go any further, there is a man in this building who has got to answer me a few questions," stated Burke. "He is the man we want."

O'Flannagan brought his fist down on the table with a bang.

"You're talking nonsense," he bellowed. "You're out of this case. You're beat!" Turning to the officers, he savagely ordered them to take the prisoners.

"Stop! Not so fast, O'Flannagan," ordered the general manager. "Go on, Mr. Burke, you were saying——"

"I wish that you'd send for Mr. Delmar," cut in Burke. "He's one of the floorwalkers in the silk department. I want to ask him a few questions while we are all here together."

Mr. Freeze hesitated, then called through the open door at his back, asking that Mr. Delmar be sent to the office at once.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE room was so quiet that one could have heard a pin drop. A look of expectancy was seen on the faces of all present except that of O'Flannagan. His face was black with anger and he fidgeted nervously, while he beat a tattoo on the table by which he stood.

A knock sounded on the door. Burke stepped forward, turned the key and swung the door wide open. The tall, angular figure of the floorwalker was revealed in the doorway.

"Come in," said Burke. "We're waiting for you."

The man sidled into the room with a catlike step. His face was expressionless, but Burke saw that his eyes shifted fearfully from the policemen to the porter, who was sitting in a chair against the wall.

"Do you know that man over there?" asked Burke as he leaned carelessly against the desk and pointed towards where the porter was sitting.

The floorwalker's eyes followed the detective's pointing finger. The porter squirmed in his seat, and he looked quickly away.

"Yes," admitted Delmar reluctantly. "He's one of the porters here in the store."

"Great friend of yours, eh?"

"What do you mean?" asked Delmar coldly.

"Oh, nothing much," answered Burke in the same careless tones as he kept his eyes trained upon the suspect.

"Is that all you want of me, Mr. Freeze? If so I had better get back to my department," said Delmar uneasily. He moved towards the door.

"Just one question more," and Burke spoke in sharp, cutting tones, his eyes fairly spitting fire in their intensity. "What do you know about the robberies that have been going on in this store?"

The man's face blanched, but he managed to say boldly:

"Nothing. I know absolutely nothing about them."

"If that's true," rapped out Burke, pointing his finger at the man, "what were you doing in the International Warehouse last night at eleven o'clock?"

The floorwalker raised his arm as if to ward off a blow.

"And," continued Burke, "how does it happen that at police headquarters they call you 'Billy the Snoop'?"

Before the words were fairly out of Burke's mouth Delmar jerked a vicious-looking automatic pistol from his pocket and cried:

"Back! All of you! You'll never take me. I'll kill the first man that makes a move." Keeping them covered with the pistol, he slid along the wall towards the door.

The move was so sudden that they were all taken by surprise. They stood dumfounded before him.

"Put up your hands," he ordered. "Be quick about it!"

Instinctively Burke reached for his hip pocket.

"Stop! None of that. Put 'em up or I'll shoot." Moving quickly forward, he shoved the gun against Burke's breast.

Slowly Burke raised his hands above his head.

At one side stood the two patrolmen with their hands in the air, an impassive look on their stolid countenances. On the chair against the wall crouched the porter, his features contorted in glee at the turn in events. Miss Randall stood by the chair, her eyes clear and unafraid and with a half smile on her lips. The general manager cowered in his chair, paralyzed with fright. Near the middle of the room stood O'Flannagan, his head thrust frward like that of a fighting bulldog. In his excitement he pressed back against the table, which overturned with a loud crash.

At the sound Delmar glanced quickly around.

Burke, who was watching the man like a hawk, saw that the hand which held the

pistol was trembling nervously. Quick as thought he took a step forward.

"One more step and I'll shoot to kill," came from between Delmar's teeth. He raised the pistol until it pointed straight at Burke's head, his finger drawing down upon the trigger.

Looking the man right in the eye, Burke took another step forward.

Miss Randall wanted to scream as she saw Burke advancing towards the deadly weapon, but the muscles of her throat seemed powerless, and she stood spellbound watching the scene.

"You know you won't shoot. You don't dare shoot a man down in cold blood," declared Burke coolly as he advanced another step forward.

Delmar's eyes flickered. He was breathing hard and his hand trembled.

Looking his man right in the eye, Burke moved upon him. Another step and he reached up and took the automatic from the man's unresisting hand.

"I knew you were yellow," said Burke as he snapped his handcuffs upon the man's wrists.

A great sigh of relief came from the spectators as they lowered their aching arms.

"Ha! You got him," shouted O'Flannagan excitedly. "It's a wonder you weren't killed."

"Aw, that was nothing," muttered Burke. "I knew my man, that was all. He's yellow through and through."

"What do you want done with him?" asked O'Flannagan, coming up to the cowed criminal.

"Handcuff him to his partner there," ordered Burke, motioning towards the porter. "Let the officers take them both to the station."

"How about the girl, Mr. Burke? She's mixed up in this, for I saw her take that coat."

"Oh, that's all right. I got her to drop the coat down the chute," remarked Burke with a grin.

"You did?" exclaimed O'Flannagan; "what's the idea?"

"I can't see why you had her do that," spoke up Mr. Freeze, who had gotten over his fright enough to take part in the conversation.

"I can't figure that out either," put in Miss Randall. "Please explain it all to us."

"First explain how you got mixed up in this mess," rasped out Mr. Freeze.

"I'm Marion Gilmore," replied the girl as she looked mischievously at Burke.

"Not Mat Gilmore's daughter?" questioned Mr. Freeze, surprised.

"Yes. Mr. Gilmore is my father," went on the girl. "You see, it's like this: I always wanted to try my hand at detective work. I teased dad for a long time, and he at last agreed to let me come down here and see what I could find out. He thought I might be able to help Mr. Burke. It's been a thrilling experience, even if it did come to naught." She laughed, delighted.

"What do you think of that?" broke out O'Flannagan. "Her father used to be on the force with me several years ago. A fine man he was, too. And to think of me fixing to send his daughter up for robbery." He wiped his forehead with a large bandana handkerchief.

"Circumstantial evidence isn't a very safe thing to go on, that's sure," remarked Mr. Freeze.

"Speaking of circumstantial evidence," put in Burke, "why, I had almost enough to send O'Flannagan up the river for quite a stretch."

"What's that?" sputtered O'Flannagan, almost overwhelmed.

CHAPTER EIGHT

"BUT there isn't much to tell," Burke agreed. "The first day I was here I was in the dress goods department. While there I saw you carrying several bolts of dress goods. You dumped them down that waste-paper chute. What were you doing with those bolts, O'Flannagan?"

"Why, yes, I do remember now," replied the store detective. "It was nothing unusual. Mr. Delmar asked me to drop those

bolts down the chute to the shipping room. He said that they were to be returned."

"There's two chutes close together. Which one did you drop them into?"

"The one on the right, I believe," said O'Flannagan. "That's where he told me to drop them."

"Now I see," retorted Burke. "That's one thing I couldn't figure out. The chute on the right must go right through to the baling-room. O'Flannagan, without knowing it, you helped those birds to remove the stuff."

"And about the coat?" asked Mr. Freeze.

"The porter, who was Delmar's accomplice, secured the garments," continued Burke. "Whatever went into the chute came out in the baling-room. The man simply packed the stuff inside of the waste-paper bales."

"That was some ingenious plan," exclaimed Mr. Freeze.

"It sure was," observed Burke. "No one would have found out in a hundred years if I hadn't overheard a conversation regarding the increased weight and number of the bales. That gave me my first clue. Opening one of the bales, I found some of the stolen merchandise. Even then all the circumstances pointed to O'Flannagan as the probable thief. While at police headquarters I saw a photograph that had just came in for the Rogue's gallery. The face looked familiar. Even then I didn't suspect Delmar as the brains of the gang." Burke paused and glanced around the room.

"When I came into the store that evening," continued Burke, "Miss Randall, or rather Miss Gilmore, gave me the real clue to the master mind of the whole scheme. It was a small scrap of paper covered with writing. It proved to be a note from the porter addressed to Delmar. He had become frightened and wanted to move out the bales at once.

"Where did you get that paper, Miss Gilmore?" interrupted Mr. Freeze.

"Delmar dropped it out of his pocket. It didn't mean anything to me, but I thought it might be a clue, so I gave it to Mr. Burke. I knew he was one of dad's men."

"I beg your pardon," said the general manager. "Please continue, Mr. Burke."

"Well, as I was saying," went on Burke, "I managed to secure a motorcycle, and I waited until the bales were loaded and they had started away from the store. I followed them until they came to the warehouse which was on the water front. Hiding inside, I waited until Delmar made his appearance on the scene. I recognized him at once from the photograph I had seen at the station. Delmar, the porter and the man who had brought the bales to the warehouse removed all the goods from the bales. They packed them into two large trunks and loaded them into the wagon again. The three men jumped on, and they drove rapidly downtown."

"Why didn't you nab the whole crew with the goods?" cut in O'Flannagan.

"I was playing for bigger game," explained Burke. "Of course I followed them to their destination. By great good fortune I was able to secure a search warrant, and with a couple of my men and the police we raided the joint. Who do you think was the master mind in this?" asked Burke.

"Some rotten crook, I suppose," snapped Mr. Freeze.

"It was none other," replied Burke impressively, "than the woman known as 'Smiling Nell,' who is wanted for the same kind of a job at Columbus. Under pressure she confessed to being at the head of the gang. Delmar was her husband."

"Then you'll get the reward?" questioned O'Flannagan.

"For capturing 'Smiling Nell,' yes."

"How about our goods? Will we get them back?" asked Mr. Freeze.

"Yes, there was a good many hundred dollars' worth that they had not yet disposed of," explained Burke with a yawn. "You'll get them back."

"I'm glad it's all over," remarked Mr. Freeze. "It's been a festering sore in our side from the start, to say nothing about the tremendous loss of money involved."

"If it hadn't been for that scrap of paper I doubt very much if we would have caught the whole gang," said Burke. "Miss Gilmore, that paper was an important clue."

"Oh, I'm so glad I helped. I saw your badge that night in the subway and knew then that you were the man father had put on the case," she replied, her eyes sparkling with pleasure.

"You haven't explained yet why you had the girl drop the coat down the chute," interjected Mr. Freeze.

"Well," said Burke, "I suspected O'Flannagan. I knew he was watching the girl. I figured that he would see her, get flustered and give himself away. That's all there is to tell. If there's nothing else I'll be going. He looked at Mr. Freeze inquiringly.

"I'll go along with you if I may?" exclaimed Miss Gilmore. "I must tell dad all about it. He will be so pleased."

"You'll hear from us later," stated Mr. Freeze as he bid Burke good-by.

Arriving at the subway entrance, Miss Gilmore remarked: "I think I had better go right up to the office. You're coming, too, aren't you?"

"I'm sorry," replied Burke, "but I must run over to police headquarters first."

"Maybe I'll see you later, then."

Reaching out, Burke took the girl's hand into his and said in a low voice: "Miss Gilmore, may I call this evening? I have something I want to tell you." He looked ardently down into the charming face upturned to his.

The girl blushed deeply, and as she withdrew her hand murmured: "I'll be waiting for you at eight." With a flash of blue eyes and a smile she was gone.

(*The end*)

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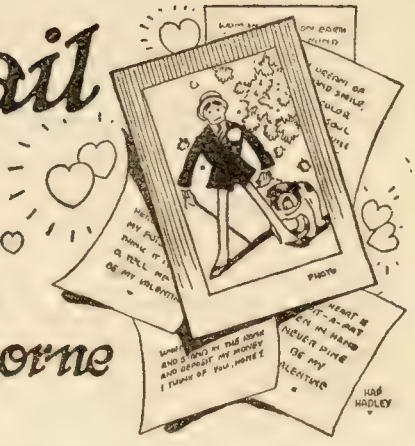

by William Hamilton Osborne

A VALENTINE STORY

IT was quite unnecessary for the letter carrier to blow his whistle, and as for ringing the doorbell, he didn't have a ghost of a show at that. For Miss Matilda Satterlee had been waiting for him half an hour at least. And when he placed his hand upon the front-yard gate Miss Matilda pounced upon him as a cat pounces upon a mouse.

"Any mail?" she queried, aglow with apprehension, and yet shivering with dread.

"Yep," replied the postman, "one and one is two, and there you are."

He passed over two very generous envelopes of fancy tendencies. One was addressed to Miss Matilda Satterlee and one to Mrs. Jane Sofield. Miss Matilda, glancing rapidly from one to the other, uttered a sigh of disappointment. "Is that all?" she queried.

The obliging servant of the public leafed over the letters in his hand.

"By gum," he exclaimed, "you're right. No, it ain't all. Here's another one for you."

And *then* Miss Matilda's pale face turned scarlet. She cast a glance of gratitude toward the postman, seized the third letter, turned, and darted into the house with the energy of a two-year-old. Her cousin, Mrs. Sofield, was waiting for her.

"Did *I* get anything?" queried she excitedly. "Matilda, did I get *anything?*"

For answer Miss Matilda passed to her one of the two highly embossed and decorated envelopes, but retained the other two herself. The widow Sofield hastily tore open her envelope and regarded the contents with pride, and also regarded Miss Matilda with polite suspicion.

"Isn't it just *too* lovely, Matty," she exclaimed, holding aloft a remarkable production covered with very red hearts, very pink young maidens and very light-blue young gentlemen, the whole dazzlingly decorated with paper lace of the very richest kind.

"I wonder who sent it to me," exclaimed the widow Sofield, as though she were completely at a loss to know. For answer Miss Matilda tore her biggest envelope open, revealing another effort quite as delightful. "And I wonder who sent me *mine?*" she queried. Whereupon they gave each other a little bird-like kiss, intimating that though they suspected each other might fly, they wouldn't say a word about it. In the next instant, however, Cousin Jane, whose nose was very sharp, and whose eyes were al-

ways very keen, peeped around behind Miss Matilda to see what other thing she might be holding in her hand.

"Did you get anything from *him?*" she demanded in a hoarse whisper.

Miss Matilda was halfway up the stairs before she answered. Then, her face turning rosier as she went, she suddenly held aloft the *third* envelope and waved it in the air.

"None of your business, Cousin Jane," she cried with sudden ecstasy in her voice; "*you* attend to your valentines and I'll attend to mine."

She reached her room, entered it, and shut and locked the door behind her.

"Another one," she whispered to herself, "another one—from you—my lover—from you—the unknown. Ah-h-h!"

These utterances of Miss Matilda's were not exactly natural, but she felt that any real heroine in her peculiar position would have given vent to them. She shivered once more, drew a long breath and then tore open the *third* envelope. It contained no hearts, no maids and men, no filigree. It contained, instead, a verse printed carefully with pen and ink:

"Whenever I dream of your eyes and your smile,
Your healthy color and soul without guile,
At such a time
I would fain resign
My lucrative position and be your valentine.
Here is my photo—if you think it's fine,
Oh, tell me truly that you'll be my valentine."

"His photo," whispered Miss Matilda to herself.

Yes, there it was—his photograph. For the first time in her life Miss Matilda gazed upon his features. And such features.

"And such clothes," sighed Miss Matilda; "such a fashionable cut."

She was quite right. Everything about the photograph was smart. The young man himself was smart. He *was* young—not over thirty, Miss Matilda told herself; just her age in fact. He had snappy black eyes that looked you very pertly in the face. His derby, cocked fashionably, just a trifle on the back of his head, was apparently of the color pearl. He wore white spats. His coat was a trifle short and his trousers a trifle tight. He carried a cane. He wore a huge chrysantheumum. His pocket-handkerchief peeped coyly from his breast pocket. And to crown it all at his side, square-legged, there stood the ugliest-looking bulldog in creation.

This was he.

Miss Matilda hid her face to conceal her blushes from the furnishings of her room. She had often pictured him as a sober-faced, serious, perhaps pious young man, and she had gloried in her dreams of him. But this—this youth was something beyond her wildest imaginings. *He* was fashionable, he cut a dash, he was swell.

"Such beautiful clothes," sighed Miss Matilda.

She had been kneeling. Now she rose to her feet and gazed through her little windows into the vistas that lay beyond, into the future.

"Come to me, my love, my love," she cried half aloud, but wholly as a heroine should.

There was a tap upon her door. It was Cousin Jane. Miss Matilda opened the door and admitted her, and without a word placed the verses and the photograph in Cousin Jane's hand.

"Look and read," she commanded with quivering tones.

Cousin Jane thrust her pointed nose and her keen eyes into the valentine. She looked and read and read, and looked again.

Then she shut her eyes and shook her head. "Ah, Matty, Matty," she cried, "to think that he loves your healthy color and your soul; to think——"

She felt a strong grip upon her wrist. Miss Matilda's eyes were looking into her face.

"Jane—Jane," cried Miss Matilda, "tell me one thing: when is he coming—when?"

Cousin Jane searched her countenance. "You—love him, Matty?" she queried.

"Yes," sobbed Miss Matilda on her shoulder.

"A man you've never seen?"

"Yes," sobbed Miss Matila, "I love him—love him dearly; you don't know. When will he come?"

Cousin Jane spoke softly: "If you love him, dear, if you're sure you love him, there's only one thing I can say to you."

"Yes," breathed Miss Matilda.

"Just—wait," cooed Cousin Jane; "just wait, and some day he'll come. Wait for him, my love. Wait."

Miss Matilda raised her head and gave a sudden little cry. "Oh," she cried, pointing to the wall, "oh, you are right—right. Look. It is a sign—a sign."

Cousin Jane followed her pointing finger. There upon the wall where it had been for years hung this motto done in fancy work:

THEY ALSO SERVE WHO
ONLY STAND AND WAIT.

"I'll wait," sighed Miss Matilda.

However, subsequent events established the fact that she did quite another thing.

Dorothy Dacres was a woman lawyer. She sat at her desk one day—the fifteenth of February, to be quite exact, when there came a little tap upon the door, like a little bird pecking at his food.

"Come in," cried Dorothy.

The door opened, and Miss Matilda Satterlee entered. She looked about her nervously.

"Are we alone?" she demanded.

"Yes, Miss Satterlee, we are," returned Dorothy.

Miss Matilda crept to Dorothy's desk. "No one knew I came," she whispered in awe-struck tones, "not even Cousin Jane. I said I'd wait, but I can't wait. I just can't. Miss Dacres," she suddenly exclaimed, her arms extended in appeal, "listen. You won the Honeyman will case for me five years ago. I didn't think you could, but you did, and now——"

"The Honeyman will case," mused Dorothy; "was that five years ago?"

"Five years," returned Miss Matilda.

"Time flies," quoth Dorothy truthfully.

"Now," went on Miss Matilda, "I've got something harder for you to do. I want you to find *him*."

She laid before Dorothy the photograph and the verse glorifying Miss Matilda's healthy color and her soul. Dorothy read the verse and stared at the photograph. She had gazed upon much cheapness in her life, but not upon such cheapness as seemed to be bunched before her in the photograph.

"Who is this—guy?" she began quite humorously as she thought.

"*Guy*," returned Miss Matilda, her face turning pale.

"I beg your pardon," said Dorothy; "it was the verse running through my head—'guile'—'guy.' I mean, who is he, anyway?"

"He," returned Miss Matilda, "is my lover."

Dorothy started as though shot. Miss Matilda's style, smile, soul, guile were about as far removed from this youth as the east is from the west. She took refuge in rereading the verses to herself. Then she glanced into Miss Matilda's face.

"You *have* got a healthy color, haven't you, Miss Satterlee, and I'm sure your soul *is* without guile."

Miss Matilda, without comment, laid before Miss Dacres four other missives, but no more photographs.

"Five years ago," said Miss Matilda, "he began sending them to me. He's kept it up ever since. Read them, please. Then you can understand how he feels."

Dorothy read them, one after the other:

" 'Woman, the brightest gem of earth,
No human mind can count the gold she's worth,
For cast your eyes across the mighty deep
And see the men that bow at Queen Victoria's feet,
But of all women that ever stood in line
Waiting for their beau—*you* are my valentine.' "

"That is the first," said Dorothy; "now for the second:

" 'My heart, its beating pit-a-pat
As I take in hand a pen.

To tell you I'm getting the opposite of fat
Thinking of you again and again;
Seeing then that the day is very fine,
Excuse my asking you to be my valentine.'

The third was this:

"'When I got to the bank
And stand in the rank
And deposit my money,
I think of you, honey;
All I have to you I'll lend
Without interest so you can spend
My cash and I'll never pine
If you'll be my valentine.'"

"You see," said Miss Matilda, observing the profound effect the effusions had upon Miss Dacres, "he has money. He's not after mine."

"Oh," returned Dorothy, "have you got money?"

"Why," returned Miss Matilda, "don't you remember? I have a thousand a year out of the Honeyman will case. You got it for me, don't you know? You upheld the will."

"So I did," said Dorothy; "five years is a long while."

"It is," sighed Miss Matilda, "especially when you're waiting for—a man. This one," she said, picking up the remaining missive, "reached me last year."

Dorothy read that one aloud:

"Eyes like diamonds,
Teeth of pearl.
Lips of ruby,
You're my girl.
I don't use tobacco,
Nor yet drink wine.
Oh, won't you be
My valentine?"

Dorothy read it again, and still again. Then she stared at Miss Matilda. Suddenly she started.

"Why, Miss Satterlee," she exclaimed suddenly, gazing intently at her client, "why, he is right—right. You *have* lips of ruby; you have teeth of pearl; your eyes are like diamonds. Why, bless my soul, I——"

She sank back, a bit breathlessly, into her chair. Suddenly she had seen Miss Matilda in a new light. *Miss Matilda was beautiful.* It was her setting that was ugly. Her hat, her hair and its arrangement, her clothes were all wrong. Dorothy looked her up and down from head to foot. Her face, her figure, even her poise, were all they should be. Yes, with the deep glow of emotion on her face, and it was there now, Miss Matilda was beautiful, really so. Still looking at her, Dorothy tapped the photograph.

"You don't want a man like this?" she queried.

Miss Matilda gulped—almost choked. "I'd give my eyes to be seen walking down the street with a man that looks like that," said Miss Matilda rapturously, "and who wears clothes like that."

Dorothy shrugged her shoulders. "He—he seems to be a sport," she said.

"I—I hope he is," returned Miss Matilda, flushing; "I—I think I should like a sport."

"What do you want of me?" queried the woman lawyer finally.

"I want you to find him," said Miss Matilda! "I'm sure you can do it if you try."

She drew out her pocketbook and took from it a little roll of bills.

"Two hundred dollars," she sighed; "it was all I could do to save it without Cousin Jane suspecting. Cousin Jane keeps me awfully close all the time; she's terribly common sense, and sometimes I'm afraid of her. But for five years I've been putting this away."

"What for?" asked Dorothy.

Miss Matilda's eyes sparkled. "Against the time when I should need the trousseau," she answered. "But," she went on hurriedly, "now it's all yours. I just want you to find him for me and bring him to me—the man who's been writing these to me, the man I'm waiting for. Will you do it, please."

Dorothy thought a moment. "The trousseau," she said, as though to herself. Then

she seized the roll of bills and tucked them away in her desk.

"I'll help you," she answered sincerely; "but tell me first, have you the slightest cue yourself?"

"Nothing," answered Miss Matilda, "except the postmark. They are all postmarked New York."

That afternoon Dorothy Dacres stepped into the box office at the Orpheum, the only vaudeville house in town, and saw the manager.

"Mr. Mix," she said, exhibiting the photograph, "can you tell me who that is?"

Mix looked at it. He scratched his head. "Gum," he mused, "I know his face all right. Billy," he called to his assistant, "come here. Whose phiz is that?"

Billy gave one look. "Shucks," he said, "that's Monty Mantilini."

"And his Mutt Mike," added the manager; "you're on. He's a vaudeville actor, Miss Dacres," he explained, "though he doesn't play this circuit. I'd 'a' known him sure if he did."

"His address?" queried Dorothy.

The manager nodded. "Oh, care International Booking Office, New York, is all O.K., I guess. All of them guys can be reached through them."

Dorothy reached *that* guy through them. She wrote a very plain letter to Mr. Mantilini, explaining the circumstances, disguising names. She got an answer—a very elaborate one, judging by the stationery. It was written on his letterhead, and his letterhead contained not only his photograph, a duplicate of Miss Matilda's, but other matter of an interesting nature. He wrote about like this:

MONTY MANTILINI
MANIACAL MONOLOGUIST
AND HIS MUTT "MIKE"
Most Talked of Artist in America
New York, Feb. 20, ——.

MISS DOROTHY DACRES:

DEAR MADAM: Nix on that kidding. Not on your merry tintype. Me a come-on for a breach-of-promise suit? Nit. Didn't you you know I was married? Me with the wifey and five little ones of my own. She had two more. No, no, don't get hasty. They belonged to her and her first. I'm their stepfather now. So I'm fixed for life. Sorry I can't qualify for your party. But, as I said, Nit, Not, No. Investigate me all you like. K. & E., the Shuberts, Henry B. Harris, Belasco—they all know me. By the way, have never done time in your town, but when I do, fill the house with your friends. They'll see the swellest act in vaudeville. Take it from me. And as refined as gasoline.

Yours for amusement,
MONTY MANTILINI.
(To say nothing of
my Mutt, Mike.)

P. S.—You can buy my phiz for fifty per. Demand is big, but we're turning 'em out as fast as possible. See?

Dorothy sat down and had another think. "Funny thing," she said to herself, "here's an old maid that nobody wants, not unless she was dressed for the proper part. And yet for five years somebody—somebody has been—— What for?"

The motive. That was the question. If the man was in earnest, if he really did love her, even if he were trifling with her, he would have shown himself inside of five years. If he were in earnest he would have appeared. If he were trifling he would have shown himself. If he wanted her money he would have shown himself.

Five years. Why had he begun just five years ago? What had happened then to make him start? Dorothy's mind traveled back five years ago. Dorothy stepped to her filing case and got out the papers. She shook the dust from them and sought and found the will. She found the clause around which the warfare had waged, the clause she had sustained for Miss Matilda:

> Seventh: I give, devise and bequeath unto my executors herein named the sum of *twenty thousand dollars,* in trust, the interest and income thereof to be paid in quarter yearly payments to *Matilda Satterlee* until her death or marriage, and upon her death or marriage the principal thereof, to wit, the

said sum of *twenty thousand dollars* shall be paid over to *Peter Birtwhistle* for his own use, benefit and behoof forever.

Miss Dorothy Dacres's eyes grew wider as she read. One sentence seared itself into her brain. Under the will Miss Matilda Satterlee was to receive the income of twenty thousand dollars, a cool thousand a year, until her death *or marriage*. If Miss Matilda married her income ceased. If Miss Matilda married, Mr. Peter Birtwhistle would get his twenty thousand dollars plump. It was then to the interest of Mr. Peter Birtwhistle to see that Miss Matilda got married. Was he behind this all? *Was he?* If he were, then why didn't he get her married? *If* his game really were to get some one to marry her, why didn't that some one, figuratively speaking, come up to the captain's office and settle?

Dorothy Dacres sent for Miss Matilda. "Miss Matilda," she said, without confiding to her client the contents of Mr. Mantilini's letter, "I have nothing to report to you as yet. But there's something I'd like to see you about, and that is—clothes."

"Clothes," gasped Miss Matilda.

"Yes," said Dorothy, "it is my business to see that you get some—well, some sporty clothes."

Miss Matilda's face fell. "I have lots of clothes," she answered, "and besides, I can't afford it. Cousin Jane keeps me pretty close, and I gave you all the money that I'd saved. I—I don't need clothes."

Dorothy took her by the shoulder. "Now, look here, Miss Satterlee," she said severely, "I'm your counsel, am I not?"

"Y-yes," said Miss Matilda.

"All right," said Dorothy, "then you'll do as I say, or I drop your case. You understand."

"Don't—don't," gasped Miss Matilda, "but I haven't any money; I really haven't, Miss Dacres."

"I have," said Dorothy. "I've got your two hundred. You come along with me."

It took all day to do it even in the ready-made style. But after they had finished with the Green Store, and the hairdressers, and the manicure, Dorothy drew Miss Matilda in front of a cheval glass.

"Allow me, Miss Satterlee," she said, "to introduce you to—well, eyes like diamonds, teeth of pearl, lips of ruby; you are his girl."

Miss Matilda gazed and gasped. "I—I look sporty," she whispered in ecstasy.

"You look beautiful now," returned Dorothy, "and now——"

"Yes?" queried Miss Matilda; "do we go to—him?"

"You go—home," said her lawyer.

Miss Matilda nearly fainted. "Home," she cried, "this way. What will Cousin Jane say to this?"

Dorothy smiled. "You're afraid?" she asked.

"Yes," whispered Miss Matilda.

Dorothy kissed her. "I'm going with you," she announced.

She did. It was well she did. Miss Matilda couldn't have faced Cousin Jane alone. That good lady held up her hands in astonished disapproval.

"You look like a fright, just like the people you see on the street, just like the shop girls."

"And like other well-dressed persons," said Dorothy.

"What does it mean?" queried Cousin Jane.

Miss Matilda cast a grateful glance toward Dorothy. "It means," she answered Cousin Jane, "that Miss Dacres is going to find *him*, and when she finds him, why"—Miss Matilda drew a long breath through her pretty parted lips—"bliss, bliss, bliss."

Miss Jane plucked Dorothy by the sleeve. "Do you mean to say you're really on the track of the man in the photograph?" she asked.

Dorothy nodded. "Wait and see," she said mysteriously, though, to tell the truth, she hadn't the slightest idea as to what she was going to do next. So far she had done her duty, anyway. She had made a woman out of a fright—and a pretty woman at that.

It was two days later that a shabby young man stepped uncertainly into her office.

"I am Peter Birtwhistle," he said; "you sent for me."

Dorothy nodded. Young Mr. Birtwhistle took a chair. He seemed tired—very tired. "Was it about a job?" he asked. "I sincerely hope it was. I'm tired looking for a job."

"It was about a job, Mr. Birtwhistle," said Dorothy, "and I'm free to say that I've looked you up and find you don't use tobacco nor yet drink wine."

"Right," said Peter Birtwhistle, "I don't."

Dorothy leaned toward him. "It must be very weary work waiting for your twenty thousand in the Honeyman estate, isn't it?" she asked.

He looked her full in the eye. "I'm not entitled to it till somebody dies," he said; "let them enjoy it. I don't wish them any harm."

"Do you remember the terms of the will?" asked Dorothy.

"I get my twenty when some—some lady dies, don't I?"

"Or when she marries," said Dorothy.

Peter Birtwhistle leaned over toward Dorothy. "That's a queer note; when she marries she may need it all the more." He stopped for an instant. The color surged into his face. "She—she hasn't married, has she?" he queried.

Dorothy shook her head. "How old are you, Mr. Birtwhistle?" she finally remarked. He told her thirty-two. She leaned back in her chair.

"Tell me all about yourself," she said.

He told her; a clean story it was. She knew it was true because he lived there in town and she had made thorough inquiries. When he had finished she suddenly thrust upon him the five bits of verse, but not the photograph.

"Tell me," she exclaimed severely, "what you mean by sending these to my client, Mr. Birtwhistle."

He looked at them, read them, and gazed at her in alarm.

"I never sent them," he returned; "I swear I never sent them."

"You had somebody send them?"

"No."

Dorothy watched him narrowly. He was telling the truth.

"About the job," he began.

"Stay where you are," she commanded. "I've got to think." She paced the floor, thinking hard the while.

"The motive," she whispered, almost half aloud, "the motive. Let me think—think." Suddenly she stopped before him and looked him full in the face, as though he had been part and parcel of her mental argument.

"*I've got it,*" she cried joyously; "I've got it. Why didn't I see it all before?"

He looked at her bewildered. She drew her hand across her face.

"The shame of it all," she cried; "the shame of it. To swindle her like that. Shame—shame! But I've got it, never fear."

"Got what?" he queried; "the job?"

Dorothy's eyes swept the room. Suddenly they rested upon the photograph turned face down upon the desk. She seized it and held it before her.

"Yes," she cried to Peter Birtwhistle, "I've got a job for you."

Dorothy thrust the photograph into his face. "Mr. Birtwhistle," she said, drawing forth what was left of her retainer, "I want you to take this to the Green Store with this picture and have them fix *you* up like that."

Peter Birtwhistle's face broke into a smile. "Me for a sport?" he asked.

"Yes," said Dorothy, "do you refuse to do as I ask?"

"No," replied Mr. Birtwhistle, "I'm game. It's part of the job?"

"Yes," said Dorothy.

He started off, but she held him. "They told me you were single. You are, aren't you? And—not engaged?"

"Engaged," echoed Peter Birtwhistle; "where could I get the money to be engaged?"

It was two days later. Miss Matilda Satterlee stood before the mirror in her room. Her surprise at her beauty had not yet worn away.

"I'm like the pictures in the books," she said to herself; "like the girls on the street, I'm pretty; somebody will have to like me now; somebody—oh"—she stretched out her arms toward an invisible presence and said the thing aloud that was intended for no ears but her own—"oh, I want to marry a man; I'm waiting for a man; heaven send me a man."

As if in answer to her plea she looked out of the window and stood there rooted to the spot. She shut her eyes for one instant and clung to the curtains for support. Then suddenly she dashed from the room and down the stairs, and sought her Cousin Jane Sofield.

"Jane," she cried, her senses reeling, "look out the window. *Here he comes.*"

Jane looked out of the window. There was Dorothy Dacres swinging along by the side of—Jane Sofield rubbed her eyes—by the side of *him,* an individual with a light-colored derby, a very jaunty suit, gloves, cane, spats, even a dog.

"Open the door, Cousin Jane," said Miss Matilda feebly, "for I can't."

Cousin Jane shivered. "I—*won't,*" she said faintly, affected quite as much as was Miss Matilda.

"Then I shall," shouted Miss Matilda. And she did. In another instant she, in her very pretty embarrassment, was bowing to Mr. Peter Birtwhistle, to his manifest confusion. Dorothy Dacres looked uncertainly from Miss Matilda to Mr. Birtwhistle, and she knew that it was for her to strike while the iron was hot.

"Miss Matilda Satterlee," she cried with the ring of conviction, of command in her voice as she said it, "I have brought him, your future husband, Mr. Peter Birtwhistle. You're going to marry each other in a week. Aren't you?"

"Yes," said Miss Matilda faintly.

"Yes," said Mr. Peter Birtwhistle, glancing with increasing boldness and admiration at Miss Matilda. But Cousin Jane Sofield came to the front.

"You're not going to marry anybody, Matilda," she cried shrilly, "you little fool. If you marry, you know what happens. You lose your thousand a year that we live on, Matty."

Dorothy Dacres smiled. "Yes," said Dorothy, "but her husband gets it—her husband, mind. She marries him. He's the remainderman." She drew Miss Jane Sofield into the dining-room and shut the door, and stood there facing her.

"Well, Mrs. Sofield," she said, "what do you think of your handiwork?"

"My—my handiwork?" responded the sharp-featured woman.

"Yes," said Dorothy, "it took me days and weeks to figure out that you and you alone were the person with the motive. You, who lived upon her money."

"I work for what I get," muttered Jane Sofield.

"You," went on Dorothy, "who knew that *you* would lose if she married? Who kept her eating her heart out for a myth who never would turn up? What do you think of it—since he has turned up?"

Jane Sofield groaned. "Yes," she said, "and they'll turn me out, they will. I'll go to the poor-house; I'll starve; I'll die."

Dorothy shook her head. "No," she replied, "nothing of the kind. I'm going to make a bargain with you, Mrs. Sofield. These people are going to get married. They'll have twenty thousand dollars. They'll be happy ever after. And as for you——"

"Yes," said Cousin Jane.

"You'll keep on living with them," said Dorothy gently; "you deserve it, for you've brought this to pass. But there are three things to be settled. First, never let her know that *he* didn't and that *you* did send those valentines. He's primed for that. Next, never peach on me. And," she ended, "I'll never peach on you."

"It's a bargain," whispered Cousin Jane.

As Dorothy left the house a radiant Miss Matilda caught her in the hall. "He's ever so better-looking than his picture, Miss Dacres, and ever so much nicer than I thought he'd be. Oh, I'm happy, so happy."

Dorothy sighed. Miss Matilda went on: "Oh, if you could only get married, too, Miss Dacres," she exclaimed. Dorothy sighed again.

Secrets of a Jail

By CAPTAIN JOHN O'BRIEN

FORTY years ago the city prisons were not conducted as they are to-day. We have recently come across some old records that are very interesting. They relate to a jail that for many years enjoyed a huge measure of publicity. We refer to Ludlow street jail. It stood on the corner of Ludlow street and Essex place, in one of the most populous localities in the city. The people who lived in the neighborhood of the jail were for the most part Russian and Polish and foreigners, who transacted their business upon the sidewalks and in the street. On the first floor of the jail were the office, reception room, dining-room, kitchen, and two small bedrooms off the dining-room, on the Essex place side. On Ludlow street there were three large rooms intended for the use of the warden, but, as a rule, these were occupied by some distinguished criminal. A large yard was enclosed on the west and south by the jail, on the north by a tenement house, and on the east by a high brick wall. In this yard the ordinary prisoners were allowed to walk every day from 9 till 11 a. m., and the prisoners of consequence as often as they felt inclined.

The second floor was the main portion of the jail. It was reached by a winding iron staircase of about twenty steps. There were two corridors upon this floor, one running north along Ludlow street, and the other east, parallel with Essex Place. On the main floor stood a row of cells, a bathroom, and the library of the prison. Above these were three rows of cells, reached by iron galleries. The cells were large, about 8 by 10 feet in size, having doors opening on the galleries, and a large window at the back of each cell, which might be opened and shut at the pleasure of the prisoner. There were two beds in each room, and clean sheets were furnished every Sunday morning.

Three keepers were in the main jail during the day, and on duty from 8 a. m. until 8 p. m. The day keepers locked the prisoners in their cells at 7:30 p. m., and then turned their keys over to the two night watchmen, who unlocked the doors at 5:30 a. m., when every one was supposed to get up to carry his slop bucket down to the sink, wash himself and his bucket, then to return to his cell and make his bed. At 8 a. m. each prisoner stood at the door of his cell. As a jail official went by with a basket containing large pieces of bread, each man selected a piece, and the official went on to the next cell. Then came another official with a tin boiler filled with coffee, from which each prisoner received a tin cup full. At 12 o'clock dinner was served. The dinner was usually composed of boiled meat and vegetables made into soup. Supper was served at 5 o'clock. It consisted of a piece of bread and a tin cup of tea. This was the regular diet of the jail, but each prisoner had the privilege of receiving anything in the way of eatables from the outside, and very few who did not have some friend or relative to bring them some little luxury.

A good many years ago a resident of this city, who was confined in Ludlow street jail for a period of five years, including the time that Ward, Fish, and Becky Jones occupied cells in that jail, kept a diary, selections from which have been included in this article. A large portion of the diary was written on odd sheets of paper, and the entries were not dated, except with the day of the week. He begins his diary as follows:

Saturday.—Few people there are in this city who have not heard of one celebrated guest of this place, Mr. F. Ward, banker and contract agent, who is occupying two elegantly furnished apartments on the

ground floor, looking out on Ludlow street. I caught a glimpse of these rooms as I passed down to the yard to take my morning airing. There were heavy carpets, beautiful lounges, sofas, ottomans, and bric-a-brac; a cheerful grate fire partly hidden behind a polished brass screen. Now and then I caught a glimpse of a thin-faced, delicate-looking man standing at the window with a colored silk handkerchief tied around his throat. His meals are served in his own apartments and he is seldom seen by the other paying boarders, who take their meals in the dining-room. His evening and morning drives must be very beneficial to his health, as he takes them so regularly.

Monday.—It is now 8 p. m., and I am writing in the deep seclusion of my dungeon cell and consoling myself with a "guid pipe." I can hear the "gang" cleaning the corridors. The "gang," I forgot to say, are prisoners who, for the privilege of remaining up until 10:30 p. m., and getting their dinner in the kitchen, do all the cleaning of the jail and carry around the food.

Friday.—Another day of my life wasted in this place. There was a great skirmishing among the officials and the "gang" this morning, as the sheriff was expected. I saw him when in the yard passing into Ward's apartments. He did not come upstairs to see the rank and file.

Nothing of particular interest was recorded in the dairy until the following Friday.

Friday.—Boiled beef and soup. A young man came in to-day, being sued for breach of promise. He had only been discharged from here a month ago on the same charge. Quite a modern Don Juan. Some few days ago one of the boarders was discharged, but I now see him here again. It appears that he is one of those unscrupulous men who live by systematic swindling. His manner of doing business is to hire an office and a few chairs. He litters the desk with bogus bonds, counterfeit money, and blank books to make it look business-like. Then he advertises in a daily paper smething in this style: "Wanted—a young man to take a position of trust. Must have $200 security." He then sits down and awaits his victims. They are sure to come, and when they do his oily tongue soon convinces them that everything is all right. He generally persuades three or four young men to make their deposits on the same day. He then gives each one a ticket to either Baltimore or Buffalo, giving them letters to deliver to his supposed agents at those places. When they are gone he takes his $600 or $800 and goes to some other city and starts again under another name. Sometimes these men are caught, but instead of being prosecuted criminally they are sent here.

Saturday.—As I am writing I hear the fire engines passing, and it reminded me of a fire we once had in here. A young man who roomed with me thought we would try a plan to cook; so we collected all the newspapers we could find every day, and taking the tin pail we had in our cell, we turned the cover upside-down on it. While one of us held a pan with ham and eggs in it over this inverted cover, the other would tear up small bits of paper and keep feeding the fire on top of the lid until our breakfast was cooked. I assure you we had many a good meal and many a jolly time over our improvised cooking range. But one morning our enjoyment came to an end by what might have been a serious affair. I had collected an unusual quantity of paper and piled it in one corner of the cell. While my chum and I went downstairs to wash, and as we were returning, I looked up and saw smoke and flames coming from our blanket, and a suit of clothes hanging on the wall were burned up. Result: No more cooking, my chum minus a suit of clothes, and I possessor of a new mattress and blanket.

Sunday.—Corned beef and potatoes. The bill of fare is a little different from the one we had on Christmas Day. Tables were spread in the corridors then which fairly groaned under the weight of roast turkey and all the other luxuries suitable to the holiday season. I lived on roast turkey for a month afterward, as the ladies who had volunteered their services to wait on the table brought what was not eaten around to the cells. During the summer a young English actor was arrested and confined here on a charge of running away with another

actor's wife. After he had been here for some time the matter was patched up, the lady agreeing to return to England and leave Arthur if they would only let her see him for one minute. To this the husband agreed. The two lawyers brought the lady here in a cab. Arthur and myself were standing on the first gallery looking out of a broken pane of glass when we saw the cab stop opposite the market and a lady get out. "That is her!" he cried, and downstairs he rushed when his name was called. He was not gone over two minutes when he came back to the gallery with a very long face. The husband's lawyer had kept the lady to her agreement, and when Arthur came downstairs he held his watch in his hands. When the minute was up the lawyer led her away, not even allowing Arthur to touch her hand. But before long Arthur was as jolly as ever, and he was eventually discharged.

May 10.—Many an unfortunate has come and gone to and from Ludlow street jail since I laid down my pen.

May 11.—One hour in the yard is now devoted to baseball. Mr. Moore, a gentleman of color, is our catcher. Mr. Hawley is our expert batter. He having broken a suspender button, the boys sued him, but when the judgment was filed we found that an irate father was there ahead of us with a judgment of $10,000. We had an acquisition to-day in the person of an Italian who weighs 350 pounds. Mr. Fish keeps to his room a great part of the day, writing. He has not as yet purchased a lamp; he prefers to borrow one. Doctor Kimball of City Hall steps fame told us we were lucky to be here, for otherwise we might be in State prison.

May 13.—Mr. Morgan held his usual Wednesday afternoon singing class to-day, but as our organist, Mr. Blood, was deep in the mysteries of jack pots, we sang without an accompaniment.

May 29.—I saw Fish sitting in the yard this afternoon with two very stylish young women. They were not his daughters, I know. They looked very much like actresses. The poor old man ought to be thinking of something else just now. I also saw Mr. Douten sitting in the yard with a woman. She is here every day to see him. He ought to be ashamed of himself. He has a wife and two children. He was trimming the woman's nails, and when he thought nobody was looking he would kiss her hand. He ought to give up that sort of foolishness. Mr. Ward's garden does not seem to flourish.

June 27.—Fish has more nerve than any man I ever saw. When he came back from court after receiving a sentence of ten years in State prison he did not show in the least by his actions or appearance that such a terrible sentence had been passed upon him. He began at once to pack up his effects, smoking in the meantime a cigar. Some one wishing to sympathize with him said:

"Mr. Fish, I am very sorry to hear of your sentence."

"My dear boy," replied Fish, "do not mention it. I have been a fool and I must suffer for it."

Some time afterward I saw him coming upstairs with a large buttonhole bouquet. Our old veteran, McDonald, came along at that moment. He was too full of sorrow to speak. Fish patted him on the back and said:

"Cheer up, old man, everything is all right; come into my room. I have a memento to give you."

He gave McDonald a bunch of flowers. I have some of the flowers. He shook hands with every one before he went downstairs.

June 8.—Mr. Dunnberg was just at my door. His wife has been here to see him. She told him that when she came in the front door she saw the warden and Mr. Ward sitting on the front stoop. We poor devils have to sit here in our rooms locked up, sweltering in the heat, while this arch-criminal enjoys himself boldly outside in the cool evening air.

The journal ends abruptly here with the following entry, signed by the wife of the author:

Received this book from Jimmy August 2. I hope that by this time next year our difficulties will be settled, and that we shall have no more trouble.

Mystery Magazine

The feature stories already published in this magazine are worth reading. The following are the titles of the novelettes contained in the numbers already printed.

1 "The Eel Man," by Robert Carlton Brown.
2 "Zitana of Maison Rouge," by F. W. Doughty.
3 "The Mysterious Web," by Armstrong Perry.
4 "Under the Hypnotic Spell," by Dr. H. Enton.
5 "The Silken Sheath," by Crittenden Marriott.
6 "A Fortune Teller's Secret," by Gladys Hall.
7 "The Mystic Emblem," by Marie Coolidge Rask.
8 "The Cards of Fate," by William Goode.
9 "Mr. Bachellor's Apartments," by W. H. Osborne.
10 "The Inner Wheel," by Octavius Roy Cohen.
11 "The Voice of the Valley," by Robt. C. Brown.
12 "The Sign of the Seven Sharks," by C. F. Oursler.
13 "Under a Mask," By Crittenden Marriott.
14 "Case 4,444," by Gladys Hall.
15 "After a Million," by Police Captain Howard.
16 "Shadowing the Blue Triangle," by C. F. Oursler.
17 "The Case of Captain Fortesque," by R. Ingalls.
18 "The Bird-Headed Sphinx," by Edith S. Tupper.
19 "The Double Mystery," by Dr. Harry Enton.
20 "The Magician Detective," by C. F. Oursler.
21 "King Cobra Mystery," by George Gilbert.
22 "The Haunted Corridors," by Wm. H. Osborne.
23 "No Man's Man," by Maxwell Smith.
24 "The Trevor Puzzle," by T. C. Harbaugh.
25 "The Trail of Roses," by Edmund Condon.
26 "The Hindoo Vanishing Clue," by Pauline Bouve.
27 "Who Was Guilty?" by Beulah Poynter.
28 "The Evil Eye," by Chas. F. Oursler.
29 "The Thirteenth Door," by Edith S. Tupper.
30 "The Game of Detective Carew," by L. Jerome.
31 "Law-maker and Law-breaker," by B. Poynter
32 "The Counterfeit Heiress," by Inspector Harrigan.
33 "Tracked to China," by Chief Roger O'Brien.
34 "After the German Spies," by May Halsey Miller.
35 "The Clue in the Box," by Alexander Douglas.
36 "Trained by a French Detective," by Rene Renaud.
37 "A Drop of Ink," by Lieut. Robt. W. Warden.
38 "The Ten Doctors," by Allan Arnold Fox.
39 "The Stain on Page 61," by Chas. T. Jordan.
40 "A Masked Mystery," by Police Sergeant Kelly.
41 "The Black Soul," by Beulah Poynter.
42 "The Sanctuary," by Wm. H. Osborne.
43 "The Mystery of the Seven Shadows," by Chas. F. Oursler.
44 "The Sign of the Dragon," by C. Martin Eddy, Jr.
45 "The Magic of Detective Woo Fang," by Frank F. Whitfield.
46 "The Decoy," by William Hamilton Osborne.
47 "The House With 30 Steps," by Ralph D. Porter.
48 "When the Clock Struck 13," by Dr. Harry Enton.
49 "A Piece of Blotting Paper," by Dorothy Weber.
50 "The $200,000 Mystery," by Ethel Rosemon.
51 "The Case of Dr. Brice," by Mary R. P. Hatch.
52 "The Phantom Motor," by Laura R. Montgomery.
53 "The Blackjack," by William H. Osborne.
54 "The Whispering Head," by Chas. F. Oursler.
55 "The Inspector's Strange Case," by B. Poynter.
56 "The Secret of the Sealed Book," by E. Rosemon.
57 "The Clue of Steel," by Willis Lathrop.
58 "Alias Louis Vardon," by Wm. H. Osborne.
59 "Mystery of the Old-Time Club," by C. Bingold.
60 "Caught With the Evidence," by Ethel Rosemon.
61 "A Little Gold Spider," by Cecil Burleigh.
62 "The Velvet Touch," by Julian Darrow.
63 "The Clue of the Red Lamp," by C. F. Oursler.
64 "The Scheme of Solomon Snare," by W. Osborne.
65 "Quicker Than the Eye," by Ralph Cummins.
66 "The Clue of the Dark Room," by H. Craigie.
67 "The Tongue of Osiris," by Marc Edmund Jones.
68 "Detective Wade's Big Case," by E. Rosemon.
69 "The Spirit Bell," by Charles Fulton Oursler.
70 "The House Behind the Wall," by Julian Darrow.
71 "The Admiral's Spoons," by Wm. H. Osborne.
72 "The Canine Clue," by Thomas J. Lally.
73 "The Psychic Enemy," by Arthur Wm. Anderson.
74 "The Wonder Girl," by Ralph Cummins.
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78 "The Stolen Year," by Edmund Elliot.
79 "The Affair at Hollywood House," by W. Kofoed.
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81 "Professor Satan," by Charles Fulton Oursler.
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94 "The Melody of Death," by Jack Bechdolt.
95 "The Trick of the Great Yen How," by William Hamilton Osborne.
96 "At Moriarity's," by Fred S. Shuey.
97 "The Lost Star of the Films," by Jack Bechdolt.
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99 "The Cross," by W. S. Ingram.
100 "The Secret Service Mystery," by Hamilton Craigie and Elliot Balestier.
101 "A Crimson Price," by Elliott Lester.
102 "The Inspector's Strange Case," by G. Jacobs.
103 "A Museum Mystery," by Jack Bechdolt.
104 "The Little Red Book," by J. Alexander Young.
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111 "Trapping the Jewel Smugglers," by B. Poynter.
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113 "A Clue by Radio," by Capt. Jack Static.
114 "The District Attorney's Secret," by C. Oursler.
115 "A Man From Headquarters," by H. Craigie.
116 "The Girl in the Case," by Carl Glick.
117 "A Scientific Detective," by D. G. McDonald.
118 "Number Nine Queer Street," by Jack Bechdolt.
119 "Trailed by a Private Detective," by Gottlieb Jacobs.
120 "The Mouse Trap," by Edith Sessions Tupper.
121 "A Radio Mystery," by Capt. Jack Static
122 "The Clawing Death," by Beulah Poynter.
123 "A Master of Millions," by Chas. Fulton Oursler.
124 "The Secret of Room 13," by Hamilton Craigie.
125 "Six Months to Live," by George Bronson-Howard.

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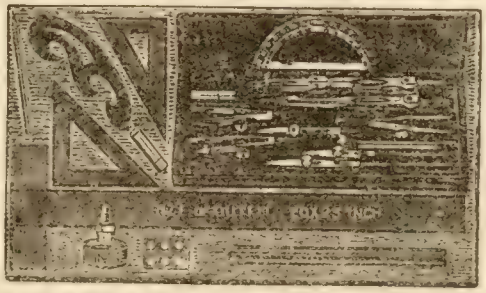

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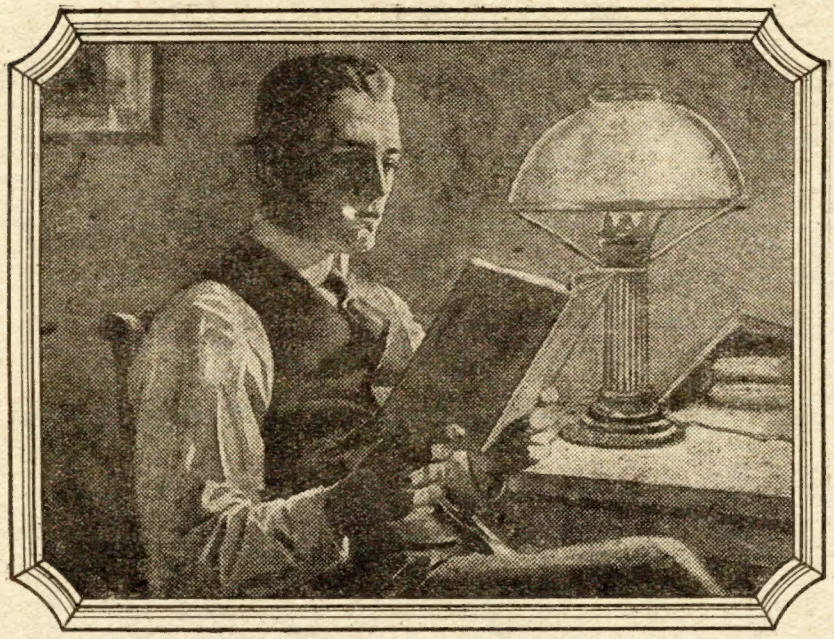

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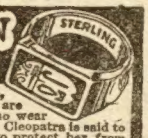

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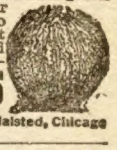

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